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# UNITY THROUGH RELIGION

*Being the Report of the Proceedings of the Fourth  
International Congress of the World Fellowship  
of Faiths Held at Madras, India, 1938.*



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*Being the Report of the Proceedings of the Fourth  
International Congress of the World Fellow-  
ship of Faiths Held at Madras,  
India, 1938.*

Compiled by  
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## PREFACE

The World Fellowship of Faiths is a continuation of the Parliament of Religions which held its first Congress of all Religions in Chicago in 1893 on the occasion of the 'World's Fair'.

The Second Congress of the Parliament of Religions was held in India in 1929 in Calcutta. It was opened by Dr. Rabindranath Tagore and was attended by representatives of all the principal denominations both from India and abroad, who took part in the proceedings of the three Sessions. Dr. F. C. Southworth, D.D., President of the Meadville Theological School, who was present at the Chicago Parliament of Religions, was present on the occasion and presided over the concluding Session. Dr. W. H. Drummond, D.D., the present Secretary of the Hibbert Trust, also presided over one of the Sessions.

The Third Parliament of Religions, the First International Congress of the World Fellowship of Faiths, was held in 1933-34 in Chicago. The Second International Congress of the World Fellowship of Faiths was organised by Sir Francis Younghusband and held in England. The Third International Congress was held again in England, in London and Oxford. The Fourth International Congress was organised in

India and it was held in Madras in the middle of March, 1938. The objects of this Congress are to draw together in common bond of fellowship people of all denominations, races and countries, to realize that the whole of the human race is one, to further peace and progress through the appreciation of one another's highest aims and ideals, to establish an understanding of the unity of the fundamental principles underlying religion in general and to invite the co-operation of science towards a universal understanding of TRUTH.

In the following pages a humble attempt has been made to give a short description of the Congress and its proceedings in Madras.



Sir P. C. Ray



## FOREWORD

All roads lead to Rome.

There is a Sanskrit work written, I suppose, during the latter days of the Mughal empire, entitled *Sāgara Sangama*, which has for its theme that all the rivers rush towards the sea, some straight, some in a circuitous course depending upon the contour of the land. Before the days of the spread of Buddhist literature in Europe it was generally held that Christianity had a monopoly of all that is noble in sentiment and sublime in conception. It is now realized that the noble precepts of Buddha anticipates by several centuries the Sermon on the Mount as also the Ten Commandments. The publication of the Sacred Books of the East has helped considerably in showing that moral precepts of the highest order are inculcated also in the Zoroastrian creed and in the precepts of Confucius.

In Europe massacres and burning at the stake were common occurrences so late

as in the sixteenth century for sectarian differences. However, we are now realizing that the fundamental principles of all great religious systems are much the same and that all humanity is connected by the secret tie of a golden thread. For this purpose it is desirable that we should meet together on a common platform from time to time for discussing ways of avoiding unnecessary feuds and dissensions between religious denominations and sects.

The conference which has been held will, I trust, show the means of realizing "The fatherhood of God and the brotherhood of man."

P. C. RAY

May 25, 1939

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# **UNITY THROUGH RELIGION**



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# UNITY THROUGH RELIGION

## PROGRAMME OF THE FOURTH INTERNATIONAL CONGRESS OF THE WORLD FELLOWSHIP OF FAITHS

Place—University Examination Hall, Madras.

Dates—12th, 13th, and 14th March, 1938.

### FIRST SESSION

12th March, 4-30 P.M.

Presidential Speech by  
The Maharajah of Pithapuram.

Speeches by  
Sir K. V. Reddi, K.C.I.E.  
The Rt. Hon. Srinivasa Sastri.  
Dr. G. S. Arundale.  
Mr. Franz Giger of Germany.  
Mrs. Clarence Gasque.

### SECOND SESSION

13th March, 9 A.M.

Prayers of all Faiths—

Mr. T. R. Venkatarama Sastri.  
Maulana Syed Abdul W. Bokhari.  
Rev. Thittila.  
Mr. Bhoats.  
Dr. Ghulam Md. Mahadi Khan.

13th March, 4-30 to 6-30 P.M.

Religions to be represented—

Hinduism, Islam, Christianity, Buddhism,  
Gaudiya Math.

Speakers—

Sir P. S. Sivaswami Iyer.

Prof. F. W. Thomas of the Oxford University.

Rev. Siddhartha.

Mr. Macnicol.

Prof. P. N. Srinivasacharya.

Maulana S. A. W. Bokhari.

### THIRD SESSION

14th March, 9 A.M.

Meeting of the Leaders of different Religions.

Subjects to be discussed—

I. Plan of the Congress to be held in 1940.

(a) Where to be held.

(b) Ways and means.

(c) Formation of a Committee.

II. How to extend the work in India.

14th March, 4-30 to 6-30 P.M.

Religions to be represented—

Islam, Theosophical Society, Zoroastrianism,  
Ramakrishna Mission, Brahmoism.

Sectional Presidents—

Dewan Bahadur S. E. Ranganatham, Vice-  
Chancellor, Madras University.  
The Hon'ble Mr. Yakub Hassan.

Speakers—

Dr. Cousins.  
Prof. Kanga.  
Mr. Bhoats.  
Swami Tapasyananda.  
H. H. the Maharanee Saheba of Nabha.  
Sardar Sardul Singh Cavishere.  
Mr. Wantanabe of Japan.  
Prof. Leeser.  
Mr. Ramananda Chatterjee.

Subjects to be discussed—

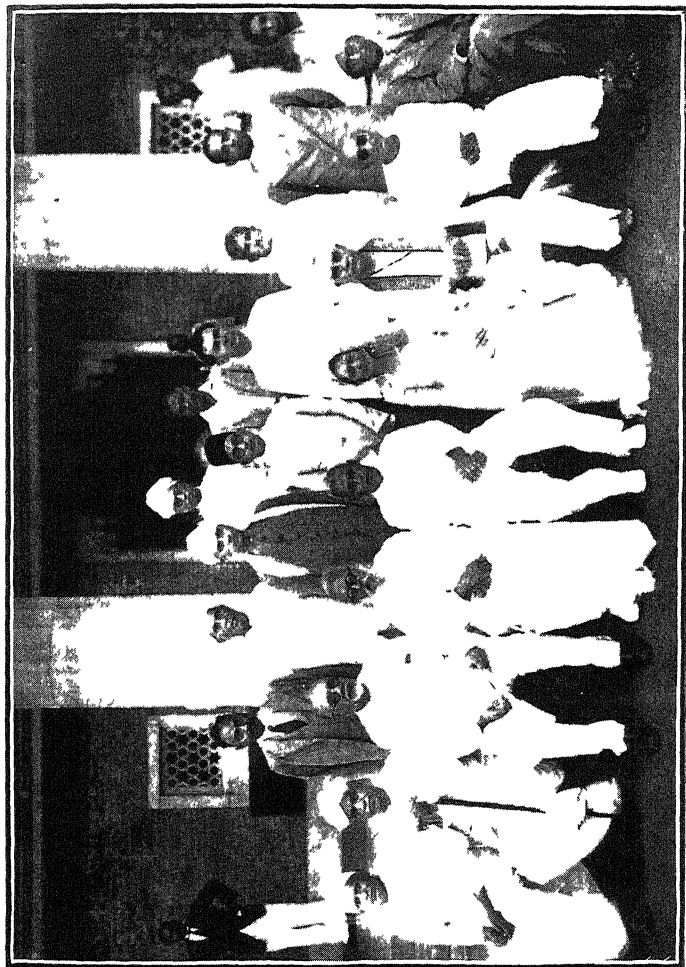
- I. Approach to World understanding through Religion.
- II. Synthesis between Science and Religion.
- III. How to induce the present generation to take interest in Religion.

## PART I

### PROCEEDINGS OF THE FIRST SESSION OF THE CONGRESS

The First Session of the Fourth International Congress commenced its sitting on the 12th March, 1938, at 4-30 p.m. The function began with a prayer offered by Mr. Ramananda Chatterjee, M.A. After the prayer Mr. Chatterjee proposed the Maharajah of Pithapuram to the chair with the following remarks—

“Dr. Sir R. Venkataratnam Naidu should have performed this pleasant function of proposing the Maharajah to the chair. Most of us know Sir Raghu-pati not only for his vast learning and his years but also for his profound thoughtfulness, his fervent piety and his high ideals, and he would have been the fittest person to propose the Maharajah Saheb of Pithapuram to take the chair on this occasion. But as physical infirmities have prevented him from coming to Madras, I have to do it, and I do it with great pleasure. I think you are all aware that the Maharajah Saheb devotes his time and his wealth and influence to the support of all good causes. But it is not only this that makes him fit for occupying the chair on this important occasion. He is himself a man of liberal culture and



Fourth International Congress of the World Fellowship of Faiths, Madras, 1938  
 Sitting : From the left : 5th, The Maharaja of Pithapuram President, 6th, Mrs. Clarence  
 Gasque, Director; 7th, Dr G. S. Arundale, President, Theosophical Society  
 8th, Sri C. Rajagopalachariar, Premier Madras.





of high ideals, and, if instead of occupying a palace, he had occupied a hut, his spiritual wealth could have made that humble abode beautiful and glorious by its effulgence. So I have great pleasure in proposing that he do take the chair on this occasion."

The proposal was seconded by Mrs. Clarence Gasque with these words : "I have great pleasure to second the proposal of the speaker. The Maharajah is one of the finest examples of humanity."

The Maharajah took the chair amid cheers and delivered his Presidential address.

In the course of his address he said :—

The World Congress of Faiths is the greatest movement of the present times. This movement, mighty in the spiritual sense, is a sacred mission. Its noble object is to bring about the harmony of religions and to abolish war with all its horrors of suffering and death and tremendous wastage of money, and establish peace and friendship between communities, races and nations all over the world. It seeks to secure the highest happiness for humanity through religion. The bond of religion is the strongest and most lasting, based as it is on eternal truth.

#### THE RELIGIOUS BASIS

Attempts are being made to get unity on political and economic grounds, and our movement supplies the religious basis, which is the most important of all.

The fundamental principles underlying all the great religions of the world are essentially the same, as an impartial comparative study of the main principles of religion will clearly show. When we delve deep into the secrets of nature, we discover the unity of the laws of nature. Their outer forms may vary but we must try to transcend the variations that divide.

We of the World Fellowship of Faiths deal with world problems. Our interests are not only national but also international, and are in the spirit, not of one religion, but of all religions. We wish to get the best, the highest and noblest out of all. Ours is a world-wide movement embracing all countries, and seeks the sympathy and co-operation of all the nations in the world.

It behoves all men and women, young and old, to do their share of the sacred work. Women, with their wonderful qualities of heart, superior to those of men, and not lagging behind men even in intelligence, are most eminently fitted for this excellent work. Truly praiseworthy is their enthusiasm for this worthy cause. May I appeal to the younger generation to utilize their energy, enthusiasm and wisdom, in the service of this noble object ?

#### INDIA'S SPIRITUAL TREASURES

Our country is a fruitful field for this grand propaganda. Even now in India are found spiritual

giants and devotees of a very rare order. Materially poor, our country is remarkably rich in spiritual treasures.

Hinduism, as is propounded in our sacred scriptures, especially in the Upanishads and Bhagavadgita, is undoubtedly and admittedly one of the grandest religions of the world.

Divine wisdom is not the monopoly of any one religion. It is possessed by all the great religions. These different faiths are so many paths leading to the same sublime goal, the Ultimate Reality.

In this vast country of ours there are various religions, sects and subsects, and members of many nations inhabit it. They have been for a long time living side by side in peace and friendship, in some places. In others, unfortunately, it is not so.

It was here, in India, that Rajarshi Rammohun Roy, the founder of the Brahmo Samaj, whose religion is really pure theistic Hinduism, proclaimed the essential unity of all Religions. He was one of the greatest men, not only of India, but of the whole world. A spiritual stalwart, an intellectual genius and a worthy descendant of our revered Rishis of yore, he had a remarkable power of intuition and insight. Thus we see India is a congenial soil for this excellent work.

For the furtherance of progress, peace and happiness, we of the Fellowship of Faiths feel it necessary to emphasise the importance of religion and of reli-

gious individuals. Man must live his finest religion and also benefit others thereby. Spiritual culture is very necessary. Plain living and high thinking and philanthropy are worthy qualities. Truthfulness and righteousness are of inestimable value. Minds must be trained to make men God-fearing and to place spiritual considerations above material ones. Religious feelings must be rightly developed. Meditation, prayer and communion are of vital importance.

All these factors greatly contribute to man's spirituality. It is the spiritually great men that are great in the truest sense. They are the men and women that ought to be at the helm of affairs in any sphere of life. Then and then alone can people be happy, and we can be sure of truthfulness, honesty of purpose, and sincere unselfish work. Religion must permeate every institution and phase of our life—the home, the school, art and play, commerce and industry and particularly politics. . . .

It is quite clear that it is of the utmost importance that political leaders should be moral and religious men in the real sense.

A genuinely religious man rightly understands his religion and properly practises it. In fine, he lives his religion. He sees God everywhere and in everything, even in the most insignificant. The spirit of God pervades the whole universe and is immanent in all things. I appeal to all men and women to contri-

bute their mite and co-operate in the sacred work.

After the Presidential address messages from Dr. Rabindranath Tagore, Sir R. Venkataratnam Naidu, Mr. C. F. Andrews and others wishing the Congress success were read.

#### TELEGRAPHIC MESSAGES

With invincible faith that all are the undying offspring of one sire reverently supplicating divine guidance and strength for noble endeavours to establish under Heaven one all-embracing family.

VENKATARATNAM.

Regret inability to attend. Wish Congress every success in establishment of World Peace and right understanding of faith.

K. M. AHMED.

Wish all success to the Conference.

RABINDRANATH TAGORE.

To the brethren assembled in the fellowship of faiths, greetings. The world is in great chaos. Might is rampant everywhere. Freedom is in peril. Humanity looks heavenwards helpless and impotent. What message of hope or cheer can one humanitarian give

to a gathering of fellow humanitarians except the message of keeping the lamp of our faith and vision trimmed bright, and burning with full blaze, in spite of the deep dark gloom that has overtaken the world.

“Watchman, what of the night?” asks the agonised humanity. It must be our solemn duty and concern to say, in prayerful attitude and with fervent trust, “The night is far spent, friends, the dawn is near.” Hope is our only anchorage in these trying times. And my message to the fourth Congress is, “Do not give up hope. Dream, strive, plan, and leave the rest to the inscrutable wisdom of the powers that guide human destiny”. I wish the Congress every success.

RAJA J. P. BAHADUR SINGH

Then Sir K. V. Reddi, K.C.I.E., the Rt Hon'ble Srinivasa Sastri, Dr. G. S. Arundale, Mr. T. Gigeri, and Mrs. Clarence Gasque addressed the Congress.

In welcoming the delegates from overseas Sir K. V. Reddi said that mutual understanding was the key to the solution of the world's problems. When one knows the viewpoint of others, personal jealousies and personal perplexities do not occur. When nations would understand each other and examine the viewpoint of other nations, then half the troubles in the world would disappear. Mutual understanding is made possible by contact of various cultures, and the World Fellowship of Faiths has brought into existence a com-

mon platform where nations would understand each other and work for the good of humanity at large.

Then Dr. G. S. Arundale addressed the Congress and said that the need for such Fellowship in the world today was great, as the need of the world is that people should come more and more together and work for the common good. In every religion there is truth. If man can realise that other people will bring some truth and good along their lines of belief, just as he is certain of his own belief, the world would be a happier place in which to live. Proceeding Dr. Arundale said that he was shortly leaving on a tour round the world and he would tell the other nations that their real hope lay in India (cheers), not because her people were wonderful but because of her traditions, her philosophy and spiritual attainments.

Mr. Franz Giger of Germany then addressed the Congress in German.

Mrs. Clarence Gasque, the International Director of the World Fellowship of Faiths, then addressed the gathering. In her very impressive speech, which was full of devotion and fervour, she emphasised the necessity of unifying all religions and inviting the co-operation of science in our approach to the understanding of Truth eternal. Science has revealed to the human mind Truths that are beyond the perception of human eyes and hence science is of immense service to the cause of religion. It reveals the hand of Providence



in nature and shows that the whole universe is created and guided by one supreme power. She referred to the discovery of life in plants by the great scientist Sir J. C. Bose, and how this discovery has brought us nearer to the realm of the so-called inanimate world. She emphasised the necessity of carrying on further research in this direction—of discovering the heart of a plant, its location and the working of that heart. She appealed to the young scientists of the age to carry on the quest in plant life. She also emphasised the need of such International religious meetings where people of different countries and of different views in life can meet on a common platform in a spirit of brotherhood and realise that they all belong in one humanity. Her speech was very much appreciated and the sitting of the First Session broke up with a vote of thanks to the chair.

## PROCEEDINGS OF THE SECOND SESSION

On the morning of the 13th March there were Prayers of All Faiths offered by leaders of different religious denominations at 9 a.m., at the University Examination Hall. Mr. T. R. Venkatarama Sastri represented Hinduism and offered a prayer in Sanskrit quoting from the Vedas and Upanishads. Maulana S. A. Bokhari represented Islam and offered a prayer from the Quran. Rev. Thittila represented Buddhism and offered a Buddhistic prayer. Christianity was

represented by a Christian Professor of a college and Christian prayer was offered by him. Mr. Bhoats and Dr. Ghulam Mohammad Mahadi Khan also offered prayers. Lastly, Mrs. Clarence Gasque offered a universal prayer. It was an interesting sight to see these leaders coming forward to offer prayers one after the other with devotion and fervour. The function concluded with a hymn sung by the International delegates. It brought home to all those present that religion is one, God is one and humanity is one. The difference in the outward expression is only on the surface. Deep underneath lies the current which unifies all these different streams of religion.

After the meeting a group photograph of the delegates of different countries was taken.

In the evening the Second Session of the Congress assembled as on the previous day at the University Examination Hall at 4-30 p.m. The Maharajah of Pithapuram was in the chair. Sectional President—Mr. Ramananda Chatterjee. Speeches were read representing the point of view of Hinduism, Islam, Christianity, Buddhism, Gaudiya Math. The assembly was addressed by Sir P. S. Sivaswami Iyer, Prof. F. W. Thomas of the Oxford University, Rev. Siddhartha, Mr. Macnicol, Prof. P. N. Srinivasacharya, Maulana S. A. W. Bokhari, Mrs. Georgena M. Gault (England) and Mrs. Elizabeth Bedlington Hopf (Barcelona, Spain).

Sir P. S. Sivaswami Iyer, who spoke first, observed that the object of the Fellowship was stated to be to bring harmony and peace and friendship between communities and to abolish war with all its horrors. Its object seemed to the speaker to be rather too ambitious. Even if they succeeded to the extent of promoting better understanding of the different religions of the world and better appreciation of each other's cultures—that, he thought, was an object sufficiently worth-while.

Wars were due to many causes, some of them racial and economic, and conflicts of religion were only one of the causes. Conflicts in the world were often due to the superiority complex on the part of some of the peoples of the world, and a feeling that they had got a mission to “civilize” other races, exploit other races and dominate them. This complex could not be removed by mere study of the various religions.

“What is required at the present time is not so much the study of religion as the spirit of religion, the need for living a religious life. We must learn to respect the cultures and religions of other nations as much as we do our own.”

Proceeding, Sir P. S. Sivaswami Iyer said that there was a right and a wrong missionary spirit in the world. The right spirit was the one which sought to dedicate the lives of people to the uplift of humanity,

free from any superiority complex. It was not associated with the feeling that it had a monopoly of truth, which, in fact, was many-sided. The wrong missionary spirit, while it did aim at the amelioration of the lot of the people in many respects, was concerned largely with the capture and the salvation of souls. That was a spirit which missionaries ought to banish from their minds. In India they had always admired the right missionary spirit.

Was it desirable to standardize religion, culture or language? asked the speaker. Could it be conducive to peace and goodwill among human beings? The speaker believed that the variety of religions, cultures and languages was not to be condemned off-hand. He who pleaded for the adoption of only one religion or culture was a narrow-minded fanatic, not entitled to any claim of allegiance.

In so far as they succeeded in discovering the merits of other religions and points of agreement between various religions, they would contribute to the spirit of better understanding of the cultures, religions and peoples of the world. That undoubtedly was a most worthy object to be aimed at, and that he thought, was the object, the Fellowship should place in the forefront.

Dr. F. W. Thomas in his address said that it was a historical fact that representatives of different religions had been able to co-exist in India. In a book

called *Harsha-Charita* of Bāna there is a description of a hermitage in which representatives of all the different sects and of different philosophies were engaged in the most candid discussions of their fundamental faiths in detail. It must be agreed that, although Indian religious philosophy has been largely characterised by intellectualistic doctrines of knowledge, yet faith has always been stressed by the greatest authorities in these religious canons. Faith is a positive theme and it is naturally difficult for the ardent upholders of any faith to believe that other religions have not as much authority as their own. The best way to convince people of the common aim and purpose of different faiths is to induce them to read books of other religions and principles. The difference dissipates itself into mere associations of a name and in some cases it rests on a foundation of a particular experience specially its own. Dr. Thomas also made complimentary references to the sincere efforts of the Secretary, Miss Sakuntala Sastri, for making this Congress of the World Fellowship of Faiths a success and for inviting him to be present in its sessions in India.

Mr. K. P. Raja Gopalacharya emphasized the greatness of India's traditions and said that even people of other countries had admitted the greatness of India's traditional culture. But in spite of that it is seen that outside India Indians are regarded as in-

ferior to others. He appealed to all those present to see that Indians gained their proper position in the Commonwealth of Nations.

Mrs. Georgena M. Gault from England said that they realised there was only one religion behind all religions, as there was but one God, behind all of Earth's Great Teachers. She appealed to each and every one present in the Congress to feel and think truthfully this united thought and take something larger away with him and hold fast to it in the onward march from all Eternity to all Eternity.

Mr. P. N. Srinivasachariar said that through politics and through international thinking, World Fellowship could not be established. Nothing but religion can be the basis of common understanding and common happiness of human beings as a whole. He, the speaker, then pointed out how Buddhism can bring happiness and mutual understanding among human beings, which are so essential for world peace.

Mrs. Elizabeth Beddington Hopf, delegate from Spain, spoke on the necessity of World Fellowship. "World problems have to be solved through Men and Women working together for the Good of Humanity . . . . Let us be worthy of our convictions and, by our actions in daily life, demonstrate True Fellowship. . . . Let Woman arise. Woman's work is not destructive but creative, and only by planting the Thought of

Universal Fellowship and Peace in the Hearts of her yet unborn sons and daughters, shall the Great Day of Universal Peace ever be made possible”.

Maulana S. A. W. Bokhari, M.L.C., said that people belonging to all religions and faiths should put their heads together and oppose the anti-God movement. They should not find fault with one another and dissipate their energies. They should give up accusing the leaders of any particular faith. Two things, aggressive nationalism and intolerance in religion, are found to be the main causes of conflicts, and he appealed to all to develop a sort of international outlook in matters political, and a tolerant outlook in matters of religion.

The Rev. Siddhartha, a Buddhist monk, spoke on the religion of love, peace and brotherhood with special reference to Buddhism.

The meeting dissolved with a vote of thanks to the chair.

### PROCEEDINGS OF THE THIRD SESSION

The Third Session of the Fourth International Congress was held as on previous occasions at the University Examination Hall, Madras, on the 14th March, 1938. The Maharajah of Pithapuram acted as President. In the morning at 9 A.M., leaders of different religions met together to discuss the following :—

I. Plan of Congress of 1940.

(a) Where to be held.

(b) Ways and means.

(c) Formation of a Committee.

II. How to extend the work in India.

There was keen discussion on the above points and some suggested that the International Congress of 1940 should be held in India instead of Japan and preferably at Delhi. Some suggested Madras, and it was agreed by all present that a place should be chosen that would afford good accommodation to foreign delegates. Further it was resolved that the present Managing Committee of the Fourth International Congress should be authorised to take adequate steps for organising the Congress of 1940 and that they should have the power to add to the number of the members of the Committee. The Yuvaraja of Pithapuram was proposed to be the Chairman of the Working Committee, and Miss Sakuntala Sastri, the Honorary Secretary, and the proposal was unanimously accepted. The meeting dissolved after a vote of thanks to the International Director and the members of the present Organizing Committee.

EVENING SESSION

In the evening, the session commenced its sitting at 4-30 P.M. and the following religions were represented :—



Islam, Theosophical Society, Zoroastrianism, Rama-Krishna Mission, Brahmoism, Sikhism, Shintoism.

The subjects discussed were :—

- I. Approach to world understanding through Religion.
- II. Synthesis between Science and Religion.
- III. How to induce the present generation to take interest in Religion.

Among the speakers were H. H. the Maharani Saheba of Nabha, the Hon'ble Mr. Yakub Hassan, Dr. Cousins, Prof. D. D. Kanga, Mr. Bhoats, Swami Tapasyananda, Mr. Ramananda Chatterjee, Sardar Sardul Singh Cavishere, Mr. Wantanabe and Prof. Leaser. The Maharajah of Pithapuram was in the chair and Dewan Bahadur S. E. Ranganatham, Vice-Chancellor, Madras University, acted as Sectional President. As he could not stay throughout the Session owing to some urgent work, he addressed the meeting first and after alluding to the aim of the Congress of the World Fellowship of Faiths, stressed the promotion of brotherhood among men of different faiths by a sympathetic study and appreciation, not of externals, rituals and outward ceremonials of religions, but of the deepest spiritual experiences and convictions of one another. In view of the growing tide of irreligion or practical atheism and of materialism, it is very necessary that all the moral and spiritual forces

of the world should be united and strengthened thereby in order to combat the spread of the evil. The contribution of the individual, though not much, for such moral and spiritual regeneration, is still very significant. Practically living a life of righteous principles is sure to exercise beneficent influence on the surroundings. The children and coming generations should be trained to live the life of the spirit. And people should join together in groups, in associations and conferences to co-operate with those who wish to promote goodwill and mutual understanding and fellowship among men of all races.

The Hon'ble Mr. Yakub Hassan, Minister, Madras Presidency, was proposed to the chair and acted as Sectional President for the rest of the Session. H. H. the Maharani Saheba of Nabha, who came to attend the session in spite of her various inconveniences, was the first to address the assembly. It was her maiden speech and she formed a centre of attraction to the whole audience with a sweet smile and introduced her subject in a simple way.

After dwelling on the universal aspect of Sikhism, H. H. the Maharani Saheba of Nabha laid stress on religious education for bringing about peace and mutual understanding among mankind. This religious education, she said, should be given from the very beginning of life. At the end of her speech she requested the President to call upon Sardar Sardul

Singh Cavishere for giving a better exposition of Sikhism.

Sardar Sardul Singh Cavishere in his learned speech said that the idea of the World Fellowship of Faiths was not quite a new one in India. One such meeting was held at Fatehpur Sikri in the Temple of Worship, and was presided over by the Emperor Akbar. The meetings were held day after day with representatives of different faiths to decide how to bring about better relations between different faiths and Akbar did his best to promote the religion which gave liberty to all religions and at the same time wanted all of them to meet on a common platform. The speaker then dwelt on the universal teachings of the Sikh leaders, who believed in and taught the Fatherhood of God and Brotherhood of Man.

As Dr. Cousins could not come down to Madras owing to some urgent work, his speech was taken as read.

Mr. Bhoats and Swami Tapasyananda addressed the meeting.

Another learned gentleman spoke on the distinctive features of Islam. By this time it was almost 8 o'clock. Many were eagerly waiting to hear the speech of Mr. Ramananda Chatterjee; but seeing that it was getting late for all Mr. Chatterjee came to the platform and requested the President to take his speech as delivered. This was very disappointing, but

under the circumstances the proposal was accepted by the President. The Hon'ble Mr. Yakub Hassan rose to give his remarks as the Sectional President of the Session. In his impressive speech he stated that truth was one and that it had been preached by different people and different teachers, and it was after all the unity of all religious thought that forcibly would come to mind in a Congress of different faiths like this. Now the evil which is necessary to combat is that religion is itself faced with great danger. People, educated people, pooh-pooh the idea of religion. The World Fellowship of Faiths will achieve a very great object if it succeeds in putting religion on the pedestal from which it is being dragged down.

Thus ended the Third Session and the Maharajah of Pithapuram, who was general President of all the sections, rose to give his concluding remarks. He said:

SISTERS AND BRETHREN,

It is my duty to say a few words by way of concluding remarks. I must thank from the very bottom of my heart our venerable friend Mr. Ramananda Chatterjee, and my esteemed friend Mrs. Clarence Gasque for the very kind things they were pleased to say of me at the opening day of the Congress.

We have listened with great interest to the beautiful speeches made by so many speakers during these three days. Allow me to say a few words in connec-

tion with the points raised in some of these speeches. Let me assure you all, and the world at large, that we do not in the least wish to belittle the importance of any worldwide organisations, either political or economic. They have their own values and are very necessary. We welcome them. But we find that even that great Organisation, the League of Nations, has failed and failed most lamentably. (Mrs. Gasque : "They have no religion"). As Mrs. Gasque points out, they have no religion. That is exactly what I was going to say. We want religion. We want all these movements, no doubt. But at the top of them all and at the bottom there must be religion. All these organisations must be conducted on a religious basis. The whole work must be done in a religious spirit. We know that it is not possible for us to attain our object in a day or two. It must necessarily take some time and I do not say that we can be absolutely certain of the results. But, it is my sincere hope and belief, as it is, I am sure, that of so many of my fellow-members of the World Congress of Religions, that the dangers of war will be greatly minimised, and, in course of time by God's Grace, there may be an entire outlawry of war. Then again, if we do not practise religion and attach importance to the religious spirit in which work has to be done to bring about peace and happiness in the world, what else is there that we can do ? There is not a movement to equal ours, much less to surpass

it. Our duty is to do what we consider best with trust in God. Let us do our duty and leave the rest in the hands of God. The outlawry of war is not the sole object of the grand movement, the Fellowship of Faiths. We wish to promote the peace and happiness of all mankind, and the abolition of war is only a branch of it. The most important of our objects is, of course, that all individuals must become religious.

They must themselves be religious and help others to become religious. And whatever we do, must be based on religion, and everything should be done in a religious spirit. Unity of the fundamental principles underlying all great religions is to a great extent apparent. We listened to the prayers of different faiths yesterday. Let us forget who were conducting the prayers. Let us eliminate the names of the respective prophets. Then what do we find? We find absolutely no difference. They are all addressed to one God and based on the same principles. As a matter of fact when I read some of the books on different faiths of the world, I simply ran through them because they were prototypes of my own religion.

I was very much grieved yesterday to hear that attacks were made on a prophet of a very great religion. We of the Fellowship of Faiths strongly deprecate these attacks in unequivocal terms.

Mr. W. Bokhari, in his splendid address yester-

day, laid stress on the point that Muslims and Hindus should show a spirit of tolerance towards one another. I am in wholehearted agreement with him. There must be give and take between these two great communities and it must be our earnest endeavour to live like brothers.

This great movement of the Fellowship of Faiths is a worldwide movement, as you know. Great men belonging to different nations all over the world have been taking a great interest in it. I am glad to find that even in Madras some of our prominent persons are on the Committee of Organisation. Not only that. They attended this Congress and delivered addresses. Special mention has to be made of Her Highness the Maharani of Nabha. Her discourse was very interesting and instructive. It is as it should be, coming as it did from a cultured lady. I am glad to find that our Premier, the Hon'ble Mr. C. Rajagopalachariar, a very busy man and in indifferent health, found it convenient to attend the opening session of our Congress. I hope this is a happy augury.

It is of course a matter for great satisfaction that all these three days there were huge audiences. That shows, I believe, what great interest they take in matters religious, especially in this great movement. On the first day, in spite of various attractions in several places, especially that great gathering at Guindy,\*

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\* The reference is to horse-races.

there was a huge audience here. Well, I appeal to the people that they should take a really keen and abiding interest in this movement and carry its noble message far and wide.

I cannot in this connection help referring to the really splendid work done by the Hon. Secretary, Miss Sakuntala Sastri. Who could have thought that she could have done all this ? It is to me really a wonder of wonders ; but I put it down to her firm faith in God and her inherent gentleness. May God bless her ! This is my humble prayer.

I now come to a point which is very unpleasant to me. I have to perform this sad duty of bidding farewell to the members of the Congress who have come from long distances, especially our European friends. They have come here at considerable inconvenience and expense, and, this fact shows clearly how they love not only India but the whole world.

I have reserved to the very last what I have to say about my esteemed friend, Mrs. Clarence Gosque, the Director of this Divine Movement. Her precious ideas and religious fervour we might have discerned in the soul-stirring and wonderful speeches we have heard from her. She not only spends large amounts of money in this cause but also personally exerts herself for the service of humanity. Can you think of a nobler soul ? How many men are there who can hold a candle to her, the God-chosen servant ! She



has been doing really marvellous work. You see how weak she looks ! Yet she is extremely strong in Faith. It is, we believe, in appreciation of her noble services in the cause of humanity that Her Majesty, the Queen Mother, Queen Mary, was graciously pleased to send a Christmas card with her own signature to her.

Now, Mrs. Gasque, to you, and to your fellow delegates who have come all the way from different countries, I tender my most sincere thanks. You are kind not only to India but to the whole humanity all over the world. I wish you God-speed in your sacred work. Humbly and sincerely do I invoke God's blessings on all those that have gathered at this Congress and also those, who though unable to be personally present here, are yet with us in spirit. May God grant our prayer !

After that the Hony. Secretary, Miss Sakuntala Sastri, got up to thank the President, speakers, International delegates and the audience. She said :

It is now my privilege to thank first of all the Reverend President, the Maharajah of Pithapuram, for kindly accepting this responsible duty, when we humbly proposed him, two years back, in Calcutta as President of the Congress, in spite of his indifferent health and the manifold duties of his estate. By having him as our President we have been able to secure a God-

fearing soul to whom religion has been dearer than life. His silent work for the poor and the neglected—the so-called untouchables of this country—extending over a quarter of a century, his concern for the homeless and the bereaved, and his various silent charities, unknown to the public, have endeared him not only to his people but won the respect of many beyond his immediate neighbourhood. His large educational benefactions and the encouragement he has given to literature are too well known to be described in detail. His presence here is an asset to the Congress. I thank him most heartily for devoting his precious time to the work of the Congress.

I must next thank the members of the Committee, Sir K. V. Reddi, K.C.I.E., Ex-Governor of Madras, Sir P. S. Sivaswami Ayyar, Dr. G. S. Arundale, President, Theosophical Society, The Hon'ble Yuvaraja of Pithapuram, Mr. T. R. Venkatarama Sastri, C.I.E., Mr. Ramananda Chatterjee, Sir David Debdas, Mr. Abdul Hamid Khan, M.L.A., Sir Vepa Ramesam, Maulana Syed Abdul Bokhari, M.L.C., Mr. G. A. Natesan, Rao Bahadur Ramanujachariar, Dewan Bahadur Narayana Rao Naidu and Dr. D. R. Bhandarkar, M.A., Ph.D.

The success of this session is due mainly to the guidance and help of the members of the Committee. Sir P. C. Ray, Kt., C.I.E., D.Sc., Ph.D., F.C.S., our Chairman, was unable to come here as his eyes had

been just operated upon. I thank him most respectfully for being the Chairman of our Committee.

I must next thank our International Director and foreign delegates who have come over to this country in spite of various inconveniences of country and climate. They have inspired us all by their presence as well as their speeches. My heart is filled with thankfulness to think of the kindness of the Vice-Chancellor of the Madras University, who has very kindly given this spacious hall with its beautiful furniture for the use of the Congress free of cost. I feel very much indebted to him for his generous help.

My thanks are due to the Sectional Chairmen and speakers of different Sessions for taking part in the proceedings of the Conference. Their eloquent and thoughtful speeches have contributed a good deal towards the success of our humble efforts.

How can I resume my seat without thanking the kind audience, who in spite of their various engagements have attended our sessions and given us patient hearing? Without their presence the sittings of the Congress would not have proved so successful. I thank you all most cordially for the trouble taken.

By the grace of God and the blessings of all of you the task undertaken by us has been accomplished satisfactorily. I thank you all again very heartily for the assistance and guidance given to me by your thoughts and sympathy.

The Session was brought to a close by a Vedic exhortation sung by the Hon. Secretary, the translation of which is given below.

**Translation of a Vedic Exhortation**

Meet together, talk together,  
let your minds apprehend alike.  
Common be the prayer of those assembled,  
Common be the acquirement,  
Common be the purpose,  
Associated be the desire.  
Common be your intention,  
Common be the wishes of your hearts,  
Common be your thoughts,  
So that there may be thorough  
union among you.

**SUPPLEMENTARY SESSION**

A supplementary session of the Congress was held at Cocanada under the Presidentship of Brahmarshi Dewan Bahadur Sir R. Venkataratnam Naidu, K.T., D.Litt., LL.D., Mrs. Clarence Gasque, the International Director, proceeding along with the Hon. Secretary Miss Sakuntala Sastri and Mrs. Caspare, an International delegate, to Cocanada to participate in the proceedings of the supplementary session. Principal P. Ramaswami, M.A., of Cocanada College, arranged the meetings at the request of the Hon. Secretary. A public meeting was held in the prayer

hall of the Brahma Mandir in the evening on the arrival of the delegates, Brahmarshi Dewan Bahadur Sir R. Venkataratnam Naidu in the chair. Some eloquent speeches were delivered by the distinguished people of the town after welcoming the foreign delegates. The function concluded with an eloquent and impressive speech delivered by the President. The Hon. Secretary thanked the organisers and the speakers of that evening most cordially.

Next morning there was a service mostly in hymns and Mrs. Clarence Gasque offered a prayer suitable to that occasion.

At the request of Mr. T. Ramamurti the proceeding of the Cocanada Session were curtailed and the International Director and Secretary proceeded to Rajahmundry, an ancient town of historical importance in Southern India. There was a small but eager audience awaiting the arrival of the foreign delegates at the town hall. On their arrival they were warmly received by the organisers of the meeting.

Short speeches were made by Mrs. Clarence Gasque, which were highly appreciated by the eager audience. Some distinguished people of the town also addressed the gathering and the function closed with a vote of thanks from the Secretary to the President, the speakers and the organisers of the meeting.

The delegates returned rather late at night to Cocanada. Next day they were taken round, according

to the kind arrangement of Mr. K. V. Sivarao, Dewan of Pithapuram, to see some of the splendid institutions of the Maharajah of Pithapuram. These were Pittapur Maharajah's College, which has 1800 students on its rolls, and the Orphanage where orphan children, both male and female, are taken care of and brought up. The children are educated here and when they grow up, the Maharajah gets them married and sometimes provides them with landed property when they settle in life. The Maharajah spends more than a lac every year for these children. The children are lodged in a palatial building with a prayer hall attached, and there are officers to look after the welfare of the children. Besides this, the delegates were taken round to several institutions organised for the benefit of the depressed classes. After this the delegates returned to Madras.

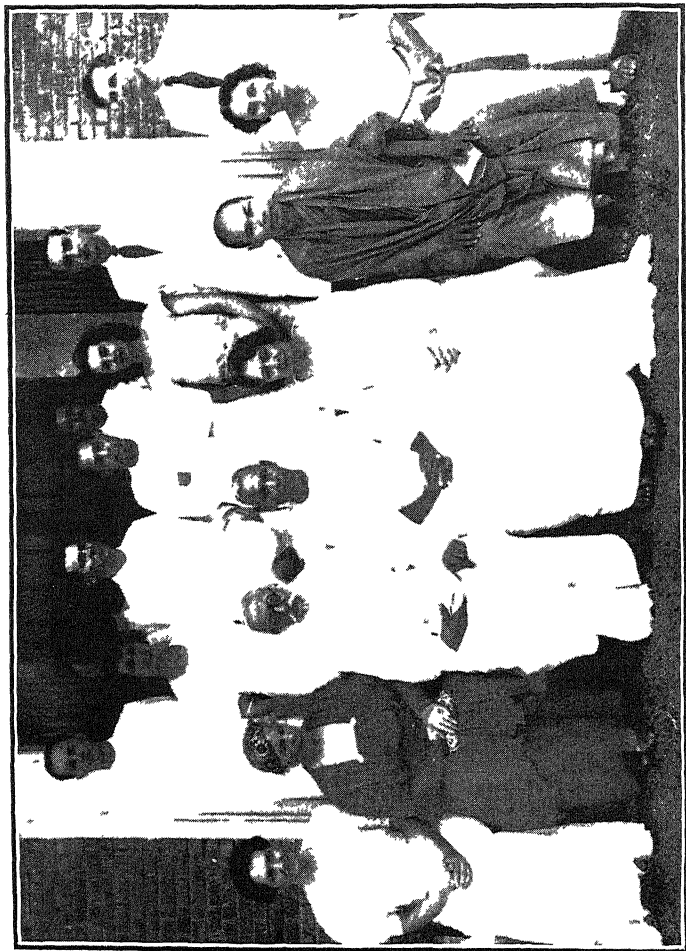
The foreign delegates, when they arrived at Madras, were given a most hearty welcome by the Maharajah of Pithapuram and the Hony. Secretary. The Maharajah arranged a luncheon party for welcoming the delegates, consisting of the most distinguished people of the city. He gave a most impressive speech welcoming the International delegates of the Congress.

The International Director replied in her sweet manner. At the conclusion of the Congress, the Maharajah gave likewise a garden party to bid farewell to

the delegates. All the distinguished people of the town were invited to his house and the party was held on the spacious grounds of the palace garden.







Fourth International Congress of the World Fellowship of Faiths, Madras, 1938  
Sitting From the left 4th, The Maharaja of Pithapuram, 5th, Mrs Clarence Gasque,  
Director

## PART II

Lectures.

### UNITY THROUGH RELIGION

Presidential Address

By

The Maharajah of Pithapuram

SISTERS AND BRETHREN,

First, I must most sincerely thank the International Fellowship of Faiths for the very great honour they have done me, however little I may merit it, in asking me to preside on this auspicious occasion. I really value this honour very highly.

The World Congress of Faiths is the greatest movement of the present times. This movement, mighty in the spiritual sense, is a sacred mission. Its noble object is to bring about the harmony of religions and to abolish war with all its horrors of suffering and death and tremendous wastage of money, and establish peace and friendship between communities, races and nations all over the world. It seeks to secure the highest happiness for humanity through Religion. The bond of Religion is the strongest and most lasting, based as it is on eternal truth. Attempts are being

made to get unity on political and economic grounds, and our movement supplies the religious basis, which is the most important of all. We must realise that there is only one God and that we are all His children and must conduct ourselves accordingly. The fundamental principles underlying all the great religions of the world are essentially the same, as an impartial comparative study of the main principles of religion will clearly show. When we delve deep into the secrets of nature, we discover the unity of the laws of nature. Their outer forms may vary but we must try to transcend the variations that divide. Hinduism, Brahmoism, Islam, Buddhism, Zoroastrianism, Christianity and other great religions of the world bear witness to this basic unity. Differences may be due to environments, stages of development, and the aspects on which emphasis is laid, but the essence is the same. Do we not find that humanity is the same throughout and that its aspirations are in the same direction in all parts of the world? This is most manifest in the mystics, who are the best specimens of Humanity. It is the same in all races, nations, countries and climates and at all times. Take for instance the instinct in man to pray to a higher Power that controls his destinies and the belief in the immortality of the Soul. They are universal. I cannot bring myself to believe that in reality there are confirmed atheists, *i.e.*, people who do not believe in the existence of any supreme power.

Let them carefully think of and patiently ponder over the world and the Universe, nature and the human soul. They will, I am sure, cease to be atheists, and become theists. Mrs. Rhys Davids, a great authority on Buddhism, has declared that Jainism and Buddhism are Theistic religions. In Soviet Russia there was a large number of people supposed to be anti-theists. Happily that number has considerably fallen and we see sure signs of the collapse of anti-God movements. This makes it clear that there was only a temporary and abnormal aberration. Now let us return to the normal. In all parts of the world, do not people believe in one supreme deity, by whatever names they may call him ? Do they not all feel that there is an unseen higher power which they cannot resist ? What does all this indicate ? It shows there is one supreme power that rules the whole world. Thus we see that the whole humanity spread all over the world forms but one family, children of the same God. Is it not up to all of us to try to bring about the highest happiness of the whole Divine family ? This is Fatherhood of God and Brotherhood of man.

We of the World Fellowship of Faiths deal with world problems. Our interests are not only national but also international and are in the spirit not of one religion but of all religions. We wish to get the best, highest and noblest out of all. Ours is a worldwide movement embracing all countries and demands the

sympathy and co-operation of all the nations in the world. It behoves all men and women, youths and adults, to do their share of this sacred work. Women, with their wonderful qualities of heart, superior to those of men, and not lagging behind men even in intelligence, are most eminently fitted for this excellent work. Truly praiseworthy is their enthusiasm for this worthy cause. May I appeal to the younger generation to utilize their energy, enthusiasm and wisdom, in the service of this noble object ?

Our country is a fruitful field for this grand propaganda. Even now in India are found spiritual giants and devotees of a very rare order. Inexpressible happiness, indescribable ecstasies, ineffable experiences are theirs. Materially poor, our country is remarkably rich in spiritual treasures. Hinduism, as is propounded in our sacred scriptures, especially in the Upanishads and Bhagavadgita, is undoubtedly and admittedly one of the grandest religions of the world. Our ancient and sublime religion has won encomiums of the highest praise from the greatest thinkers in the world. Most profound truths are found in Hinduism. In philosophy and religion our Faith stands unsurpassed. Our religion is interwoven with our daily life. Toleration occupies a prominent position in it. We respect the other great religions and honour their leaders. Divine wisdom is not the sole monopoly of any one religion.

It is possessed by all great religions. These different faiths are so many paths leading to the same sublime goal, the Ultimate Reality. A western writer says, "Every philosophy and religion which has appeared in Europe, finds its counterpart in those which dot the long history of India. . . . ." In this vast country of ours there are various religions, sects and subsects, and members of many nations inhabit it. They have been for a long time living side by side in peace and friendship, in some places. In others, unfortunately, it is not so. It was here, in India, that Rajarshi Ram-mohun Roy, the founder of the Brahmo Samaj, whose religion is really pure theistic Hinduism, proclaimed the essential unity of all great Religions. He was one of the greatest men not only of India but of the whole world. A spiritual stalwart, an intellectual genius and a worthy descendant of our revered Rishis of yore, he had a remarkable power of intuition and insight. Thus we see India is a congenial soil for this excellent work.

For the furtherance of progress, peace and happiness, we of the Fellowship of Faiths feel it necessary to emphasise the importance of religion and of religious individuals. Man must live his finest religion and also benefit others thereby. Spiritual culture is very necessary. Plain living and high thinking and philanthropy are worthy qualities. Truthfulness and righteousness are of inestimable value. Minds must be trained to make men God-fearing and to place

spiritual considerations above material ones. Religious feelings must be rightly developed. Meditation, prayer and communion are of vital importance. The wholesome belief in the immortality of the soul is of incalculable value and plays a very important part. The human soul, being a divine spark, is immortal and has the priceless assurance of an eternal life of bliss in the presence of its Divine Parent. Let us contemplate the beauties and grandeur of nature, which are really indescribable. How much more beautiful and grand must be its Creator !

All these factors greatly contribute to man's spirituality. It is the spiritually great men that are great in the truest sense. They are the men and women that ought to be at the helm of affairs in any sphere of life. Then and then alone can people be happy. We can be sure of truthfulness, honesty of purpose, and sincere selfless work. Religion must permeate every institution and phase of our life, the home, the school—art and play—commerce and industry and particularly politics. In politics immense harm or great good can be done to the people. In support of my contention let me quote a few extracts.

“The tendency of those in power has often been to act according to the immediate advantage. The Nation has been exalted above morality, man and God.”

“What is a man profited if he gain the whole world and lose his own soul ? Our neglect of the soul

cannot but entail spiritual poverty or even spiritual starvation."

The great American mystic and poet Walt Whitman has said :

"And speaking of religion I say that the real and permanent grandeur of these States must be their religion. Otherwise there is no real and permanent grandeur. Nor character, nor life is worthy the name without religion. Nor land, nor man, nor woman without religion."

Sir Surendranath Banerjee of honoured memory, one of our greatest political leaders and statesmen, said :

"Is not politics a part of our duty ? And does not religion embrace the whole circle of our duties ? Yes, politics based upon religion or deep moral earnestness is the one thing that is needful for this country. Politics divorced from a high moral purpose becomes the paltry squabble for power in which humanity can feel no interest."

Thus, it is quite clear that it is of the utmost importance that political leaders should be moral and religious men in the real sense.

A genuinely religious man rightly understands his religion and properly practises it. In fine, he lives his religion. He sees God everywhere and in everything, even in the most insignificant. The spirit of God pervades the whole universe and is immanent in all things. The pious person feels that whatever he



thinks speaks or acts is known to the Omnipresent, Omniscient and Omnipotent Lord. Nothing can be concealed from Him. Such a man cannot but act as in the constant presence of Providence. God is in every heart and is indeed the driving power. One of the greatest men in the world and of supremely sublime spirituality and a God-inebriated soul has ably and beautifully expressed this idea in one of his soul-stirring and wonderful addresses.

“We forget, in the midst of man-made memories, that the central vitality is God Himself. He is not merely a distant driving power but the ever-present, immediate, inmost vitality. God is the plan and the purpose, the essential and enduring reality, behind this ever-unfolding scene called creation. Let us realize it as a literal fact that even now my tongue could not speak but for the direct working, nay the personal presence, of the Universal Witness in our souls through this seemingly trivial transaction. We misbelieve, we delude ourselves, when we talk of the laws of science and their compelling rule. All originate in, all emerge from, all converge towards, all terminate in the supreme God. The Lord in His sanctified Self is present in the inner soul, aye, seated in the very heart of every created being.”

These are the words of wisdom that fell from the holy lips of one whom Mr. Paul Brunton, himself a mystic and famous writer, rightly describes as a “seer” and “one of India’s rare God-immersed souls.” I refer to my most revered master Dr. Sir

R. Venkataratnam Naidu Garu. Life based on religion is life truly lived. Divorced from God, things are worthless. The truly religious man hungers and thirsts for God. He lives and moves and has his being in Him. His whole life and all things around him have a spiritual significance. All that he gets he accepts as gifts from God. His very life, his health, wealth and happiness, opportunities, facilities, friends, advisers and workers, all are vouchsafed by Him. God is all in all. In the tiniest particle of sand, in the smallest blade of grass, and in the brightest stars in the sky, and above all, in the sublime human souls, God is discerned. From the lowest to the highest, they are all miracles shrouded in mystery. We may understand them to a degree but none can know them completely. Who can fully fathom the depths of this divine mystery? Science can, to some extent, wrest the secrets out of nature. The rest must remain a mystery.

Properly understood, science is of immense service to the cause of religion. It reveals the hand of Providence in nature and shows that the laws of Nature that prevail throughout the whole world, aye, the entire Universe, are identical. This fact proves beyond doubt that the whole Universe is created by one Supreme power. Truly, reason goes very far. In fact, it is our sheet anchor. Yet, ultimately faith in the Infinite must come to our aid. Who can completely comprehend the Incomprehensible! Our

bounden and sacred duty is to place entire trust in the Omnipotent and make an absolute self-surrender to the Divine Will. The sole aim of godly men is to obey implicitly the dictates of their consciences, the precious gifts of God and to serve Him to the best of their ability. To obey the mandates of their God, they brave the gravest possible dangers. Whatever their sufferings and losses, they remain true to their Lord. They serve Him by serving humanity. What noble examples their lives are and what marvellous lessons we can learn from them! Coming into touch with these pious souls has an ennobling effect, all its own.

It is with the invaluable help of noble people of this type that we wish, with trust in God, to further the progress of this great Organization. The Fellowship of Faiths would afford facilities for fostering feelings of Fellowship and friendship and provide opportunities to bring together members of different nations so that they may come into intimate contact with and rightly understand one another. Meetings and Conferences of religious character, social gatherings, poetry, drama and music, and last but not least, games and sports are some of the means we mean to adopt. Thus it would, under Providence, be possible to abolish war, to remove devastating poverty and establish peace and friendship among all the Nations of the world. May God in His Mercy bless our endeavours with success !

## WORLD FELLOWSHIP AND THE HINDU POINT OF VIEW.

By

Sir K. V. Reddy, K.C.I.E., Ex-Governor of Madras.

MR. CHAIRMAN, LADIES AND GENTLEMEN,

I have been asked to say a few words welcoming the delegates of this World Fellowship of Faiths who have met in our great city. I do so with the greatest pleasure. This Movement, started only four years ago, having met in America in 1934-35 and having held two Congresses in the great city of London, has honoured us with their presence in this place. And one can very easily see that this movement has not come a day too soon. The main purpose of this important Movement, as I understand, is to advance peace and progress of the world and seeing what is happening all around us just now, is it not the right moment that such a movement should appear?

Look at the world. Something seems to have gone wrong with the nations. People seem to be going mad. Look at the Armaments and the race of the Armaments and the amounts of budgets of all European nations. Look at sad Spain with internecine war, brother killing brother, father killing

son, and son killing father. Look at Germany and the treatment which it accords to the Jewish race. Look at Italy, remember what has happened to Abyssinia and the intention of that great country of Italy to have the mastery of the Mediterranean.

Come to the east. What do we find ? The great population of the earth is being destroyed mercilessly by the Japanese. Is it not time now when human intelligence, when human genius, human capacity should concentrate its efforts to see if anything can be done to stop the mad purpose of the nations ? Can India do anything in that matter ? Can we, a subject race, be of any help in assisting this great World Movement in achieving its object of obtaining peace for humanity and progress for human civilisation and human culture ? The learned chairman has indicated on what lines India can be of some service to this great cause. A subject race, as we are, we are still the monarchs of this spiritual world (cheers). India and Hinduism have honoured spiritualism, have devoted their time to it for ages, centuries during which their one thought was, what is man, what is his past, what is his future, what is the use of the world ? What is the use of this existence ? And in the course of the great philosophy that was developed in this country you will find traces of what spiritualism can do to stop this mad pursuit of war.

Hinduism is perhaps the most tolerant of all reli-

gions in the world.—I mean no offence to other religions. Here in this country you will find philosophers of great difference, including philosophers who deny or at least do not think about God. Philosophy of Vaiseshika admits briefly the existence of God and ignores and does not consider Him as the Creator. Jaimini says that there may be a God, but he does not admit that He is the controller of the morality of nations. Then come the Charvakas, who deny the very existence of God.

In Hinduism, taking all these therein, I see the toleration of which this faith is capable. Freedom of thought has been allowed, resulting in what you find today in our country. I wonder whether any of you have been to see our religious services to the end. If we had been, we would have heard the very words the priest says at the end : ‘Samasta Lokāni Sukhino bhavantu.’ He would add, ‘Santih, Santih.’ It is not merely for the country or his family that he prays to God. It is not alone for Indians nor for humanity either. It is for all existence. For we are believers in more worlds than one. There you find the keynote to the Indian thought, to the importance which it attaches to peace. Cannot spiritualism in India be of some help to the world ? After all, what does this Movement want ? It wants people of various nations to understand each other : ‘Atmānam Viddhi.’ ‘Know thyself’ is the instruction given to the seekers after Truth

and this world organisation wants to know not “ thyself ” alone but also let nations know each other.

The misfortune of the world is that misunderstandings have increased, whether in the case of individuals or of nations and these are mostly, if not wholly, due to the misunderstanding of each other. If only people understand each other, one knows the viewpoint of the other, and then personal jealousies, personal troubles will not occur.

Extend the principle a little bit more. If only nations understand each other, if they are willing and are prepared to examine the viewpoint of other nations, and are prepared to concede, if that concession is possible, to do justice where injustice is visible, then half the troubles of the world, I am sure, will have disappeared. Now we have got this association, this noble band of selfless workers, coming from various countries to this land, asking for what we have, and they want only to see if we have anything to give them. It is by contact of cultures, that the world's development can be expected and it is that contact of cultures that this body wants. India has always been willing to be of help in directions like these. We are an unarmed race; with arms we cannot help you, but only with that faith in the Almighty God to whom we look up. After all the greatest men on earth had yearned to have some personal God to make an appeal to in the hour of distress. The whole

world is in distress today. Let us appeal to Him to see that His children are not torn by these dissensions and conflicting views and that the nations might be given the good sense to see that after all nothing can be gained by these quarrels. On the other hand, if we understand each other, there will be peace in the world and in that expectation I have the greatest pleasure to welcome this conference.



## FELLOWSHIP OF FAITHS.

By

Dr. G. S. Arundale, President, Theosophical Society.

MR. CHAIRMAN AND FRIENDS,

It gives me very great pleasure to join in the welcome which Madras has decided to give to this important conference. We need such a conference because the need of the world is that we should come more and more together. With all our differences not given up, we are using them for the common good and that is of supreme importance, so far as the faiths of the world are concerned. Any one who constantly, reverently, and humbly studies the great teachings of the saviours of humanity must come to the conclusion that in every religion there is truth; we can realise that. If we can realise that other people will bring some truths along their lines of belief, just as we are certain of our own lines of belief, the world would be a happier place in which to live. And so do I feel if one result of this conference comes, namely, that we work here not only in Madras but throughout the whole of India, for a League of Faiths, just as they have in the West a

League of Nations, we shall contribute immensely to the relief and happiness of the world.

It is true that the League of Nations is not very healthy. It is proved that the League of Nations is weak, but we must help to make it strong. It is one of the great pillars of the temple of Humanity; it is being built even now under our eyes.

But when we talk of a Fellowship of Faiths, I think we mean also a freedom of Faiths, I think that in every faith we should feel free to grow to be great in its own way, greater and greater in what it gives not merely to the members of the Faith, but to the whole world and every individual.

Hinduism has much to learn from Christianity, Christianity has much to learn from Hinduism, and so with regard to every faith in every religion. We cannot afford to ignore any other Faith, for there is truth in every religion. I feel therefore that if we, in this country, can bring a spirit of fellowship and goodwill, that will make immensely not only for India's regeneration but for the regeneration of the whole world.

We need this fellowship in every department of life. We need to have this fellowship for ourselves for our personal beatitude, our emotions of mind and every aspect of our consciousness; there must be a fellowship; there must be harmony. If we are disharmonious, we are killed. We think the doctor

can help us. The doctor can help us to get rid of the money. But we can help ourselves better. The individual must have his fellowship, the family must have its fellowship, the country must have its own fellowship. And if we have our fellowship of Faiths, we may think of a fellowship of communities in India. India needs the Fellowship not only that she may be free, but that she may help to give freedom to those countries which are still in the prisons of their ignorance and of their pride.

I am leaving in a short time on a tour to Europe and America. I am going to tell everybody that there is a ray of hope lying in this country. Not because you people are so wonderful; but because you are so great. I think we are all equally great. But India has got a traditional background, universality of philosophy and truth that greets western traditions. And here, now, in this country, every great faith is represented, and is alive, and is full of ardent devotees. I am waiting until the Premier can grant freedom to the whole country so much so that she can stand in her own splendour (cheers). I am so happy that this work has begun and has been organized under the inspiration of our great friends.

There are other speakers who are wondering whether I am going to stop quite shortly. How many grand points have been taken away from my speech by previous speakers ! When we know each other we

only feel friendly to each other. We are very nice people on earth; we know ourselves perfectly; but other people do not know that we are as nice as we are. There are many people who do not know how nice the Premier is. And we British people are very nice people, but we don't understand each other. If you understand us better and we understood you better, everything would be going on much more smoothly. I am very thankful that we have an excellent gathering even on a Saturday afternoon when generally gatherings are conspicuous by their absentees.

I hope that through this session we shall realise happiness, realise fellowship and therefore realise freedom.

# APPROACH TO WORLD UNDERSTANDING THROUGH RELIGION.

By

Mrs. Georgena M. Gault, London, England.

LADIES AND GENTLEMEN, BROTHERS AND SISTERS  
FROM NEAR AND FROM AFAR,

We have drawn together from the four corners of the Earth to discuss the greatest problem that each person on this Planet has to face, sooner or later, for or against Religion.

Religion is like, "Inherited Tendencies and Prenatal Influences" which we each and everyone inherit or assume from our Mother and Father at birth.

We are educated and grown up, imbued and steeped in that thought, until we arrive at an age when we begin to think for ourselves.

Some have never passed out of this stage, they remain content to believe all they read and are taught by their teachers and ask no questions.

While others break through the veil, and begin to query why they have to be bound Physically, Intellectually and Spiritually, by all these Dogmas and Creeds.

So, bit by bit they free themselves, they begin to think, they break away from dogmas and creeds that are man-made, and issue out into the sunlight of truth and understanding, Facing the Eternal Creator as the ONE and only Source.

I take it that all Beliefs and Religions are as Facets of light, which reflect only a part of the real, and man has, through his narrowed understanding, added one imposition after another which hold fast the individual or Nation; so that they can be controlled, for as long as we remain within those chains of beliefs and have no knowledge, we are slaves to our local religion limited in our thought, word and deed.

But today we dare to meet together here in this beautiful city of Madras, and this glorious country of India, from all lands, creeds, colors, willing to the sinking of our personal fetishes of family, Church or Nation and we rise above it all, into the need of Universal love, from which we all have originated.

We come out into the open, into the glorious realms of freedom where we are not ashamed to take hands around the Earth and look into each other's eyes, feeling our greatness as Children of God, and relief at having at long last reached this goal, where we can sink all Nationality, all Colour, Creeds and Churchianity, also Family Ties of a limited nature and all personality, having dropped behind us all

Beliefs, having entered into the land of larger vision and understanding, into the realm of—I KNOW !

We realise that there is only one Religion behind all Religions, as there is but one God, behind all of Earth's Great Teachers.

If, each and everyone of us in this Congress, can truthfully feel and think this united thought, then great work has been accomplished.

But, do not let us all bring our narrow ideas and beliefs here, only to take them back home with us, and to begin to live in word, thought, and deed, the vicious circle of limitation all over again.

Let each and everyone take something larger away with him and hold fast to it, as I myself shall do, having met and talked with and learned to love all of you as Universal Brothers and Sisters, as on we go from all Eternity to all Eternity.

## THE NECESSITY OF WORLD FELLOWSHIP.

By

Mrs. Elizabeth Bedlington Hopf, Barcelona, Spain.

Coming from Spain, also a Land of Sunshine, where Mother Nature is so bounteous with her gifts, I feel thoroughly at home in your lovely Sister Country, this wonderful India, the cradle of Wisdom and the Pearl of the Ocean.

Alas for Spain, she is at present torn by inner conflicts. Many times, it is brought home to us by the experiences Humanity seems still obliged to pass through, that there is not sufficient appreciation of the necessity of Fellowship in all things, particularly in Religion. We feel this especially with regard to Spain.

The Keynote of our actions should be the Recognition of the great urge, felt by the peoples of All Countries, to see present problems settled by applying our Higher Intelligence. This Intelligence is represented through the man in his application of the male principle in constructive ideas, and by the Woman through intuition and Selfless Love, manifesting in inspiration and creative thought.

World Problems have to be solved through Men



and Women Working together for the Good of Humanity.

How great a work lies waiting to be accomplished by these two principles of Life, the Male and Female, Man and Woman, co-operating, co-equal but specialised, studying and attaining understanding of the true meaning of Religion, and cultivating the inner Realization, but rejecting the outer shell of accumulations of centuries of misunderstanding and personal Limitations, placed upon the Peoples by self-interested Institutions.

Let us be worthy of our Convictions and by our actions in daily life, demonstrate True Fellowship, let us not first tear our Brothers asunder and later make peace with the remaining few: and above all, let woman realize that by going to War Fronts, she sends a Nation centuries backward. **LET WOMAN ARISE.** Help her to awaken. Let her be educated, and if she herself does not yet fully appreciate her great mission, let her be educated in Eugenics, to know that Woman's Work is not destructive but creative and that only by planting the Thought of Universal Fellowship and Peace in the Hearts of her yet unborn sons and daughters, shall the Great Day of Universal Peace ever be made possible.

We are daily learning the Futility of trying to adjust differences—be they of a Political or Dogmatic nature—by Force. It is daily being brought home to

us that "*the Hope of the World is Love,*" *Divine Love, the Love* which bringeth the Peace which surpasseth all the Understanding of Man.

But we must become conscious of the necessity and the possibility of Peace within and having become Conscious souls, we shall then radiate that glorious Reality, which is true Religion, fine Fellowship, in all our Thoughts, Words and Deeds.

We shall encompass the World and All Humanity in that thought of True Faith, in Peace, and we shall then Realize the True Fellowship of Faith, Faith in ourselves and in each other through Divine Love and recognition of the one great Father of All and the God of All who has imparted His Divine Spark to every Breathing Soul.

May the Light of Understanding encircle the World and may the loving thought of Peace become manifest upon Earth, to the glory of God and All His Associates. A M E N.

## PRAYER OF ALL-FAITHS.

### THE SIGNIFICANCE OF MOHARRUM.

By

Mr. Abdul Hameed Khan.

MR. CHAIRMAN, FRIENDS,

The gentleman who should have spoken this morning could not come here on account of the fact that today is the day when regularly the members of the Shia community of Mussalmans devote the whole day to the memory of the great tragedy that took place in Karbala, thirteen hundred years ago. On account of his engagement, he could not respond to the invitation of the organisers of this Congress. He has sent a letter regretting his inability to be present.

This Congress has met during the season when Musalmans generally and the members of the Shia community in particular mourn and commemorate the Martyrdom of Hussain, the grandson of the prophet of Islam. I am sure such of you, as have been interesting yourselves in the study of Religions other than your own, and such of you as have studied the history of Islam, are doubtless aware that over thirteen hundred years ago at Karbala, that Hussain,

fighting for the establishment of Truth against the enemies of Truth and Justice, was sacrificed. Not only he, but a very large number of the family of the prophet gave up their lives in order to maintain and justify truth against evil. This is not a feast as you sometimes believe it to be. This is an occasion when particularly the Shias spend their time in narrating the history of the events, and they also devote the whole day to prayer. The significance of this event, one of the greatest events in the history of the world, is that it is a conflict between truth and evil, justice and injustice, right and wrong and the triumph of truth as a result of the sacrifice that we have known in this world.

The enemies of the prophet's grandson wanted him to accept the leadership of a person who, from all accounts, did not fulfil in his life the purity, righteousness, and sense of justice that were demanded of the leader of the community in those days. The prophet's grandson Hussain was prepared even to give up his life rather than accept the leadership of the man who was not fit to lead. There was the battle in Karbala; although Hussain's party was very small and his enemy was very well armed, and had a large army, yet the severe battle took place, and in the end the grandson of the Holy Prophet lost his life and so did his companions.

As in other cases, even this tragedy has a lesson

not only for the Muslim community but for the whole world, and for all times to come. From time to time as it has been said, injustice appears to triumph and then the will of God manifests itself and then the evil and injustice are put down and destroyed for the time being, if not for all time.

On every occasion when such a triumph of evil and injustice appears we have found in the history of the world and different parts of the world that great leaders of communities and religions have come up and have destroyed evil, and righteousness and justice have triumphed. The tragedy of Karbala was the manifestation of right and truth and justice so that the world thereafter remembers that, whatever temporary triumph of evil there might be, ultimately righteousness triumphs over evil. This is the significance of the Moharrum and this is the significance of the Martyrdom of Hussain.\*

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\* As the Congress was held on the Moharrum day, an account of it was given.

## PRAYER OF ALL FAITHS—ISLAMIC PRAYER.

By

Mr. Maulana Syed Abdul W. Bokhari.

In Islamic prayer intermediaries are done away with. There are no symbols. The devotee is expected to ponder over the attributes of God, the humanly imaginable and the heavenly attributes of God. So that by constant remembrance, it is expected that the individual soul will lose itself in the supreme one. And that is the greatest bliss. I would just like to read a few of the quotations from the Holy Koran, concerning prayer. Of course, the beauty of the original can never be expected in a translation. However, I shall attempt to translate those intranslatable verses and shall be reading them to the august gathering. I have brought also with me a student of my college who will recite the Arabic original when I finish it.

Glory to Thee, O God, and Thine is the Praise and blessed is Thy name and exalted is Thy Majesty and there is none to be worshipped besides Thee.

Who is it that answers the call of the afflicted soul and brings it the desired Solace but Thee—O, Lord ?

(Therefore) We beseech Thee for help and seek Thy Protection and believe in thee and we are thankful to Thee and are not ungrateful to Thee and we declare ourselves clear of him who forsakes Thee.

O God, Thee do we serve and for Thee do we pray and prostrate ourselves, and to Thee do we betake ourselves, hoping for Thine all-pervading Mercy and fearing Thy displeasure.

Behold : There is in the remembrance of God, a solace for the yearning heart ! Remember Him, by whatever name you please, Allah or Rahman, All good names are His; therefore Remember your Lord within yourselves with wakefulness and love, morning and evening, and do not be of those who are neglectful.

Let us therefore turn our souls to this remembrance ; wholly to Him who originated the heavens and the earth. There is none like Him—He is the All-hearing and All-pervading. Let us consecrate our prayers and our sacrifices, great or small, our very lives and our Deaths for Allah, the Lord of the worlds. No associates has He. O God, Thou art our King, Thou art our Lord—We are all thy erring servants and children. We confess our shortcomings to Thee. We implore Thee to forgive us our shortcomings and trespasses. Who else will forgive them, O Lord, but Thou ? O God, Guide us all to the best of morals

and give us strength to turn ourselves away from evil. And who, again, can do this except Thou ?

O Lord, Thou art the very light of the Heavens and of the Earth, the very opener of the seed underneath the earth and the sustainer of the bird right in the Mid Heavens, and with Thee are the Keys of the Known and the Unknown. To Thine supreme Majesty do the heavens and the earth offer praise, and all that is in them and there is not a single particle that does not praise Thee, but we do not have the knowledge to understand them ! Every thing is perishable but Thine wondrous face. From Thee we are and to Thee shall we all return.

Worship therefore Him—the Alive and the Enduring. Age and slumber comes not near Him. He is all that is in the Heavens and all that is in the Earth. His Throne extendeth beyond the Heavens and the Earth and He is never weary of preserving them. He is sublime—The Majestic.

We beseech Thee—O Lord, not to leave us to our own passions and prejudices even for a twinkling of an eye. All Praise is due to Thee—O, Lord of the worlds. Thou art Beneficent and Merciful. (Thy Mercy encompasseth all things) Thou art the Master of the Day of reckoning. Thee do we serve and Thee do we beseech for help. Guide us (to-day and always) on the right Path, the Path of those on



whom Thou hast bestowed favours and not of those who have displeased Thee or have gone astray. We ask all this in Thy Holy Name. Amen.

## APPROACH TO WORLD UNDERSTANDING THROUGH RELIGION.

By

Sir P. S. Sivaswamy Iyer

LADIES AND GENTLEMEN,

I crave the indulgence of the audience on account of my age and request permission to address the meeting seated. My knowledge of the movement of the World Fellowship of Faiths and its aims and object is very scanty. It is derived from what I learn from the address, from the masterly address, of the Maharajah Saheb of Pithapuram, our president of this session.

The object of the Fellowship of Faiths, according to him, are the harmony, the promotion of harmony between the different religions of the world, the abolition of war and the establishment of peace and friendship between communities, races, and nations.

The objects as stated by the Maharajah appear to be rather too ambitious. I am not saying this by way of any criticism of the scope of the movement. If people could accomplish these objects, so much the better, but I think that even if he succeeds to the extent of promoting a better understanding of the different religions of the

world, if he could succeed in promoting better appreciation of each other's cultures and religions, I think it would be an object worthwhile to strive for.

I do not know whether the Fellowship of Faiths can succeed in abolishing war. Just at present, we are living in times when there is a great tension between the different nations of Europe and in Asia, and we do not know whether it can at all be said that the cause of this tension is of a religious kind. Wars are due to many causes and conflicts of religion are only one of the causes of war.

But religious wars are mostly things of the past. At the present time the causes are more racial and economic, and not due to religion. I do not ignore the fact that in India we are familiar with religious conflicts. We are painfully familiar with such conflicts in this country. Just at present, we hear of apprehensions of riots between the Hindus and Muslims in Northern India. It is very unfortunate that there should be such occurrences and apprehensions of such conflicts in our country. But so far as other countries in the world are concerned, the conflicts in them are due not so much to religious differences as to other causes. Racial and economic causes are far more responsible for war than any differences on account of faiths or even cultures. No doubt, it is said, that in some parts of Europe, the differences of culture between one community and another are sometimes so

fundamental that one of the communities had to be wiped out from the politics of the sphere.

But whether religious differences are the sole causes of war or not, there can be no doubt that the removal of or diminution of differences between people on account of religion, will make for greater harmony and peace in the world. And conflicts are often due to a superiority complex, and a feeling that some races have got a mission to civilize other races, to exploit other races and to domineer over them. Very often it is said that some races are the chosen races of God and that they have a mission to demonstrate to the rest of the world. These causes cannot be removed by any mere study of religion.

What is required at the present moment is not so much the study of religion as the spirit of religion. The need for living the religious life—that is what is wanted at the present moment rather than merely theoretical understanding of other religions. We must learn to respect the cultures of other religions, of other nations and other peoples as much as our own.

There is a right missionary spirit and a wrong missionary spirit in the world. The right missionary spirit is the one which seeks to dedicate the lives of the people to uplift humanity, free from any superiority complex, working for the betterment of humanity. The right missionary spirit is not associated with the feeling that it has got a monopoly of truths. Truth in

fact is many-sided, and truth in matters religious is very difficult to attain and no nation and no religion can claim the monopoly.

The wrong missionary spirit on the other hand, while it does aim at the amelioration in many respects of the lot of the people among whom it works, is concerned largely with the capture and salvation of the souls from downfall. That is the spirit which the missionaries ought to banish from their minds. The right missionary spirit, as I referred to it just now, is one which has always avoided this danger and I have often wished that all people should imbibe more and more of that right missionary spirit and work for the amelioration of humanity, of people of other religions and cultures.

Can it be said that only one religion is entitled to acceptance in the world? Is it necessary or desirable to standardise religions or cultures or even language? Suppose we all had one religion, one culture and one language, can it be believed that that state of things will be far more conducive to peace and goodwill among human beings or would contribute to the richness of human interests? I believe that the variety of religions and the variety of languages are not to be condemned offhand.

Standardisation may have its conveniences, but it has also got its necessary limits. And he who pleads for the adoption of one religion only in the world or

one language in the world or only one culture, is a narrow-minded fanatic.

Every religion has got its own good points and in our study of the religions of the world what we must strive to do is not to find out the faults and defects of other religions but to appreciate the good points, the merits of other systems of religion, and so far as we succeed in discovering the merits of other religions and the points of agreement between the various religions, we shall be contributing to a spirit of better understanding of the cultures of the world, of the religions of the world, and the peoples of the world.

That is undoubtedly a most worthy object to be aimed at, and the members of this Fellowship of Faiths should always place it before themselves in the very forefront. Whether this Fellowship of Faiths can succeed, as humanity is now constituted, in abolishing war, I do not know, and I may even say that it is extremely unlikely.

We have had experience of three wars already within the last two or three years. There was the Abyssinian war waged by a Christian nation against another Christian people and we have had the war in the Far East between the Japanese and Chinese both of whom are followers of the same, practically the same religion, because the religion of Japan can be described as Buddhism or it is largely indebted to the influence of Buddhism. And we do not know whether we are on

the brink of a greater war than the last one. It might be a war between Christian nations, between neighbouring nations, between nations among whom there is hardly any difference of civilisation or culture.

I am not therefore over-optimistic with regard to the attainment of this object of abolition of war. There have been great religious teachers in the world and they have all fought against wars and had recourse to force for the purpose of settling differences, and among the valuable political institutions which were set up was the League of Nations in Geneva. And that, too, we know, has failed lamentably.

The League of Nations could not reform individual men. What is wanted is the reformation of character and it is the change of the heart of the individual that is essential for the uplift of the human race. Without any change of heart, change of spirit on the part of the individual men, it is impossible that nations can all on a sudden be transformed into peace-loving nations. I therefore venture to think that the object which should claim the attention of the Fellowship is rather the promotion of a better understanding between the different peoples in the world. But much of the differences among us is due to ignorance and misapprehension and this can be removed by the study of other religions, other cultures in a sympathetic spirit.

The great thing to be learnt is the lesson to live and let live. Hinduism has always stood for tolera-

tion. When the early Christians were driven out of their homes, they found a settlement in India. So also with the Parsis. India has always afforded an asylum for refugees from various nations. Hinduism has been a most tolerant religion in the world. The countries where the Fellowship of Faiths requires to be preached are the countries of Europe, like Germany. There is unfortunately far too much of bigotry in our country also among the followers of different religions. This has to be eradicated and that can only be possible by the study of each religion and by mutual appreciation and greater sympathy.



# WORLD FELLOWSHIP AND ITS SIGNIFICANCE IN THE RELIGIOUS WORLD.

By

DR. F. W. Thomas, M.A., D.Litt., of Oxford University

MAHARAJAH SAHEB, LADIES AND GENTLEMEN,

I certainly do not deserve to stand in this place and address this gathering of the World Fellowship of Faiths. And certainly I must add also, that I cannot pretend to have any of those oratorical gifts which are so very conspicuous among many members of this gathering and which have been exhibited so admirably in the speech which you have just listened to from Sir P. S. Sivaswamy Iyer.

Perhaps Miss Sastri was acting under the influence of the recollection that I was present at the last meeting of the Fellowship of Faiths in Oxford when I had the privilege of being present and presiding over that meeting when we listened to a very interesting speech from Doctor R. E. View. He had not long before produced a remarkable book to which I had to draw your attention on the occasion. This book was a manual of religious doctrines and of ritual, a work which was compiled entirely of extracts from sacred literature of the principal religions, and the

only deviation that he had allowed himself in the actual texts was the omission of all the particular wordings denoting God or Creator or tell-tale geographical and historical terms, and a striking result of his work is that the adherents of any one of these great Faiths would have considerable difficulty in distinguishing, except by some memory, chance or other, the extracts derived from the religious books of different nations. It is a remarkable achievement, and it was a very practical demonstration of the extent of agreement which exists between the different races and faiths, and it produced a deep impression on the reader.

Perhaps another reason, I may suggest, for Miss Sastri's nomination of myself on the stage was that I might be able to convey good wishes for the success of the gathering on behalf of my own friend Sir Francis Younghusband. His name, I think, will always be associated with the formation of this congress. I have been much interested to be present on this occasion and to listen to the very instructive and sincere and convicting exposition of Sir Sivaswamy Iyer of the limits and the capacity of such an association in regard to the particular problem of the abolition of war. I am sure that we, all of us, realise quite clearly, if we did not realise before, that it cannot be the mission of the World Fellowship of Faiths to directly abolish war, because wars among many and various nations are due to human instincts and

human frailties which have to be combated in some other way than the propagation of faith. Sir Sivaswamy Iyer also very interestingly spoke of the exceptional position of Indian religions in regard to tolerance. It is a historical fact in India that representatives of different religions have been able to co-exist and take part in frank discussions and debates in societies of learned men.

There is an interesting passage in a book called *Harsha Charita* of Bāna. This describes a hermitage which was under the leadership of a certain Buddhist saint, and in this hermitage gathered representatives of all the different sects and of different philosophies to engage in the most candid and sometimes in the most frank discussions of their fundamental details.

That has been characteristic, a thing you must all admit, of Indian religious belief from very early times. Of course, we have other cases of tolerance in India also. It is not seldom that ruling persons have been, at the same time, encouraging and patronising different faiths with equal liberality. But in this case the moving condition has been produced not by faith but by absence of faith.

I think, it must be agreed that although Indian religious philosophy has been largely characterised by intellectualistic doctrines of knowledge, yet faith has always been stressed by the greatest authorities in these religious canons. And therefore when we have

faith, we come into contact with problems, because faith is a positive theme, and it is naturally difficult for the ardent upholders of any faith, to introduce into this that element of hypothetical criticism that provides for the assimilation of the fact, that possibly other statements in other religions may be equally true. So the existence of Faiths may be regarded as a condition which calls for the special aspect represented by this Congress of Faiths.

Now, I think, it may be said perhaps, the ways of convincing people of the common aim and purpose of different faiths, is by inducing them to read the books of other religions and principles. I should like to say that the more and more one studies the books of Hinduism and Buddhism, the more and more does one find oneself unable to name any particular, any specific doctrine, or any specific ethical principle which is not common to the other.

I think it is one of the foundations of the Congress of Faiths to help us not only to understand the dogmas, generalities and principles of other religions, but also to acquire that sympathy with which to remove that very difference between different faiths which is not in some way or other ultimately rational.

# APPROACH TO WORLD-UNDERSTANDING THROUGH RELIGION

By

P. N. Srinivasachariar

If world-understanding is ever necessary, it was never so as it is today. Today a great portion, if not the whole, of the earth has come to be known and a great number of human races is connected together politically, commercially and otherwise, and misunderstandings of various types are maturing amongst them which, if not checked in time, are apt to bring unhappiness and misery to all. But how a correct understanding can be brought about amongst men of different countries and different nations is the problem of problems that has confronted every one who longs for world-happiness.

It is obvious that it cannot be brought about politically; neither is it possible to bring it about commercially, nor educationally. What then can possibly unite human races that differ from one another in social custom, in language and in many other ways? What can bind them together in such a way as to make them feel brotherly affection towards one another, and work for the common happiness of the human

beings as a whole, rather than fight for the supremacy of one nation or one tribe or one community over the others ? What can make them think of the whole world as the field of their benevolent actions rather than of the small portion of it in which they happened to be born or in which they have been bred up, or in which it was their lot to live ?

To my mind there is *nothing else except religion that can bring about such a universal brotherly feeling*. Nothing but religion can tie human beings with one another in love and affection. Nothing but religion can be the basis of common understanding and common happiness of human beings as a whole.

Even if this problem is solved in this way, there comes another problem before us which is, in a way, still more difficult to solve owing to our dogmatic tendencies, and that is as to the religion which should be selected and accepted as the proper one to be the world religion. Should it be one of the existing religions, or should it be one that is altogether new, or should it be one made out of one or all of the existing religions ? Again, what should be the characteristics of the religion that would be suitable to be the world-religion ? Or what characteristics are necessary for a religion to bring happiness and correct understanding among the human beings ?

It is, of course, impossible to make a religion out of all existing ones. They, as you all know, are partly

contradictory to one another in their principles of morals and philosophy. It is also not easy to introduce an altogether new religion. It is therefore left to select for the purpose either an existing religion or one made out or re-formed suitably out of an existing religion. If we come to that, the next question is, which is the religion out of so many existing ones that would be acceptable to all the different nations either in its own form or in a modified form? Which is the religion that can stand a modification—an outer modification indeed—without any prejudice to the fundamental principles?

In this issue Buddhism comes forward to console us. Buddhism is the only religion which admits of any such modification as would be agreeable to every nation, tribe and race. Anybody can become a Buddhist without changing his national or tribal or racial customs and manners. He will have only to improve his moral life.

The appropriateness of Buddhism for selecting it as a World Religion (if I may say so) lies firstly in its simplicity, secondly in its high moral code, and thirdly in its rationality. In fact, Buddhism is described by prominent scholars of the West as the only religion which has reason as its basis. When reason is a common virtue of human beings, a religion based on reason, amenable to reason, will, without any doubt, be quite suitable for the human beings as a whole,

better than a religion based on faith or some such other thing.

Its moral code, though magnificent, is very simple. As it is based on reason, it is agreeable and acceptable to any man of any country. Good and bad actions are distinguished from each other not on the ground that they are enjoined or prohibited by any teacher or prophet but on the principle of motive or feeling that actuates its doer. So an action done out of compassion or pity is regarded as good action or *Punyakriyā* and an action done out of malice or anger or pride is regarded as a bad action or *Papakriyā*.

The religious life of a man as Buddhist—both as a monk and as a lay follower—is as simple as possible. Human freedom is never interfered with in any walk of life. No bondage is felt in any way. The common characteristics of a good Buddhist are universal love, affection, pity, kindness, justice, and the like. Respect for the feelings of others is his guiding principle in his dealings with his neighbours. In his ordinary dealings in the society he should always take care not to interfere with or hinder the happiness of others. He should not do wrong out of respect for his fellow men even if he does not care himself for the effect of it. The following are the five precepts that a Buddhist is expected to follow always :—*viz.*,



1. He should refrain from taking life.
2. " " " " committing theft.
3. " " " " " adultery.
4. " " " " telling lies.
5. " " " " drinking intoxicating  
liquor.

You all know that the criminal code of any good government is based on these things, and therefore a good citizen in any country is a good Buddhist. The advice of the Buddha to his lay disciple as to how he should behave towards his parents, his wife and children, his relatives, his servants and menials, his friends and assistants, his neighbours and fellow men, and monks and priests is embodied in a discourse called Sigalovada Sutta. Asoka the Great took ideas—nay extracts—from this discourse and inscribed them on stones. Commenting on this discourse Dr. Rhys Davids has said, "How happy must have been the people of the valley of the Ganges who followed this advice: and how happy would have been the people of the valley of the Thames if they would also follow it." A true Buddhist can always be happy in the midst of miseries of this world; he can make others also happy. This is the greatest advantage of Buddhism over all the other religions of the world.

A Buddhist is expected to live a life of learning, teaching and preaching meditation. This meditation

is meant for suppressing mental weakness and getting rid of mental defilements and passions. The highest aim of Buddhist meditation is the purification of the mind out of all defilements and thereby attaining the perfection which is known as Nirvana.

Self-mortification and self-indulgence in any sense are highly condemned by the Buddha. Hence the life of a Buddhist—either as a monk or as a lay disciple—is simple as well as happy. Hence the path laid down by the Buddha for his followers is called the Middle Path, which is now an oft-quoted expression both in the East and in the West.

Reason is the guiding principle in Buddhism. As reason is a common virtue of men, any man can be a good Buddhist even if he does not know the actual preachings of the Buddha. Hence any good man can be a good Buddhist, whether he is literate or illiterate, whether he is rich or poor. And any Buddhist can be happy so long as his conscience is clear, and he can always have a clear conscience, if he acts according to his reason, in other words, if he is guided by his unbiassed reason.

Thus you all will agree, I am sure, that Buddhism is the most suitable religion for men of every country and of every nation. It has the possibility of standing for a world-religion and can bring happiness and mutual understanding among human beings, which are so essential for world peace.

♦

## APPROACH TO WORLD UNDERSTANDING THROUGH RELIGION—MUHAM- MADANISM.

By

MAULANA S. A. W. Bokhari, M.L.C.

MR. PRESIDENT, LADIES AND GENTLEMEN,

I do not know if I can really stand equal to the occasion, coming, as I do, after a very erudite speaker like the professor. But here we have come together this evening not so much for rhetorical display as for putting our heads together and thinking whether we can realise that, in spite of all our differences, we can still live in brotherhood, and in peace.

To my mind, the real difficulty in the world and the cause of the various wars in the world are aggressive nationalism and intolerance in religion. The causes vary from place to place, country to country where wars take place, but generally speaking, if we are going to tackle all these causes, probably these two things, *aggressive nationalism and intolerance in religion, will be found to be the two causes of conflict.* I believe that the antidote to those two causes will be the great benefit expected from internationalism as opposed to aggressive nationalism and tolerance in

religion; and the extent to which we can become more tolerant towards one another and become more and more international in our political outlook, will pave the way to peace, towards which this Fellowship of Faiths is leading.

I also believe that the one great need of the present age is that we should realise that the various religions and creeds have come to stay. As Prof. Sreenivasa Chary pointed out, there are very many paths to guide us and those various paths have come to stay. That point has to be recognized by us. We cannot get away from the idea. *Today the main problems seem to me that all religions and faiths must put their heads together. All those who believe in God must be gathered together and must work against the Anti-God Movement.*

This is not the time for us today to fight with one another, and to waste our energies. It is time for us to give up all our differences, come together and explore the points of similarity and do away with points of difference and to gain strength to fight against the atheism of the present day.

I feel that it is time that we should try to understand one another's religion also, not in a spirit of condescension but in a spirit of give-and-take and in a spirit of equality. *It is time that we should give up accusing the leaders of the various Faiths.*

Only the other day, it occurred to me after a long while, that I should go through that great book, the Short History of the World, by H. G. Wells. I was astonished to see that in this century of ours, with all its civilization and culture, a prophet who is guiding the destinies of one-fifth part of mankind should be dealt with in such a manner as H. G. Wells has dealt with the Prophet Muhammad.

As a matter of fact, my pain would have been equally great if in this century any other person, however great or small, were treated in the same manner as our great leader of men the Holy Prophet (May peace of God be upon him and his apostles) has been treated.

In this century of ours to write such things about a prophet is thoroughly incorrect. I do not know from what book H. G. Wells got that knowledge, but it came to me as a great surprise. I feel that in this century, if this Congress of World Faiths is to achieve anything, steps should be taken that at least public opinion is created against such writing of people, however big or small they might be, in direct contradiction to historical facts.

But coming to the subject proper, I would like to refer to one or two things in my talk to you this night. I should imagine that the Prophet Muhammad gave a message in which he did not take away the spiritual relationship of all spiritual organizations or of all

religions that existed, but, on the other hand, confirmed all the religions that existed before.

The Prophet has enjoined us to believe not only in Jesus and Moses but in all the prophets of God. He preached that even as God has given for our life the great Sun that is shining from morning till night, so has that great master also given us the light of Religion.

*There is nothing which does not praise God, which has not spirituality. But we do not understand their language. We do not understand the way in which the leaf of a tree is praising the Master.* The leaf has life as the late Sir J. C. Bose explained. But that has been expounded very early, even before 1400 years or much earlier. As Sir P. S. Sivaswami Ayyar pointed out, that spirituality is even there and the Prophet, when he was talking, talked of the spirituality of the people of all religions. There were something like 24 thousand prophets sent to the world. I say the number is not definite. It stands only for a great number. It might be more.

Our religion is a tolerant religion. Muslims are intolerant not because of that great religion. It is in spite of that great religion. It is time therefore that the Muslims understand the great tolerance with which the Prophet Muhammad and all the prophets of God preached and it is up to you the non-Muslim friends that you should study the great tolerant religion.

Today Islam has become a backward religion, and it is said that Islam is imbued with intolerance. I take the opportunity to tell you that there is nothing like that. The Prophet Muhammad and all the prophets according to the tradition of the Christians of Nazareth, not only did allow them into his mosque, but allowed the Christians to pray in their own way in that mosque.

I declare that this question of music before the mosques is of a very recent origin. We have existed in this country for over a thousand years from the time of Abul Kaseem when he came to Sindh. Right through the history of the relations of the Hindus and the Muslims, we never hear of the story of music before mosques. It is of a recent origin, the cause of which I need not talk about in this august assembly. But I only implore you, looking into the conditions—the political conditions of this country, not to disturb the religious susceptibilities of a people who may not be really acquainted with that particular aspect of Religion.

God, I am sure, will be more pleased if by just stopping the music, we could give the Muslim an opportunity not to have any ill-will towards the Hindus. If the stopping of music could help that, I would, with all humility and broadness of mind, request the majority community, and I am perfectly sure, speaking as I do on a personal knowledge of many of the

principles of the Hindu community, not to bother about it. It is necessary on the one hand that we, Muslims, should understand the great tolerant spirit that was preached by the Holy Prophet Muhammad. But it becomes the other communities always to take into consideration the religious susceptibilities of the minorities. After all, it is the privilege of the majority community to give a little to the minority. I am interested in this question from another viewpoint and it has a bit to do with the history of India.

I do not know what causes were responsible for the sort of history that has been written.

Tippu Sultan is represented as a most intolerant Muslim king in India. In the great history of Tippu Sultan I find that there was just in front of Tippu's palace a Vaisnavaite temple. It speaks volumes on the tolerant spirit of this great man.

I go a step further, I find a temple in Tippu's summer palace in Bangalore, that was built for his minister Purniah. Some of these things show that history has not been written correctly. It will do well for us to change it when the question of rewriting Indian History is seriously taken up.

I think it will do well to refer to you one great charter which the Prophet Muhammad had given, a Magna Carta, to Christians of Sanai, which Charter is mentioned by no less a personage than Bishop Hopcock. He says that it is the most liberal grant



ever granted not even by a prophet but by the most up-to-date king, to a community which was living under his regime. The Prophet said that anybody who became his successor must protect the nunneries of Sanai by state aid. He has made it a thing compulsory to the Islamic Government. And the maintenance of those nunneries devolved upon the state revenue of the Islamic kingdom. Keeping those things in view we cannot say that the religion of Prophet Muhammad was an intolerant religion. There may be a few stray cases here and there, but can those stray cases prove that? Aggression in China does not mean that Buddha caused the aggression. It is Japan that is responsible. So that these things must not be attributed to the founders. They are the results of the prejudices among communities that are fighting with each other. When these misrepresentations are taken away, then the fair name of Islam will be upheld.

Then about the question of Internationalism. To us there is no question of the English, French, Chinese or Japanese. Whoever subscribes to the unity of God and the brotherhood of man, comes into our great community. That individual may belong to Ethiopia, Java or Sumatra. When he joins the brotherhood of man, he becomes a man of one particular community. So that the prophet in his spirit was the Founder of a faith which was international in outlook. But this Islamic internationalism is not opposed to nationalism.

The present Islamism is, in no way, opposed to nationalism, because the prophet was a great nationalist. He said nationalism was a part of religion. Nationalism was a part of the religion of man. But he characterised it in his own life. Arabia was under the yoke of Byzantines and Persians but the prophet removed the yoke of the Persians and made the people and the country free.

Therefore it is for us to believe that something should come out of this Congress of World Faiths, for which we must *develop a sort of international outlook in matters political, and a tolerant outlook in matters of religion.* Thank you.

# CONGRESS OF FAITHS AND ITS UNITY.

By

DEWAN BAHADUR S. R. Ranganatham, *Vice-Chancellor,  
Madras University, Sectional President.*

LADIES AND GENTLEMEN,

Permit me to say a few words to you, as I have to leave the meeting. I consider it a very great privilege to be here and take a part, however small, in the proceedings of this Congress of the World Fellowship of Faiths. In such a Fellowship of Faiths, as the name implies, there is no question of the assumption of the superiority of one faith to another nor is there any endeavour to try to evolve a plan for an amalgamation of several faiths.

The aim of the Congress of World Fellowship of Faiths, I take it, is two-fold, first, to foster the spirit of tolerance and goodwill among men of different faiths, through a proper study and understanding of one another's religions. And secondly, to get all men and women who believe in religion and believe in the fundamental unity of mankind, to promote world peace.

In regard to the first object, namely, to promote a spirit of tolerance, I think we must all admit that

we do need this spirit of tolerance in India at the present day. All real tolerance is the outcome of sympathy and understanding of other faiths, rather than the tolerance which is sometimes merely synonymous with indifference. It was rightly pointed out here, that India has always been hospitable to other religions and tolerant of other faiths than Hinduism ; that is perfectly true. But it is also admitted that, at the present day, owing largely to political reasons, intolerance, communal feelings have existed specially in some parts of the country, and religious, social and racial differences have been brought about in order to expedite communal differences. This is something we should fight against, if we wish to promote national unity.

As was pointed out to you by a speaker last evening, if we want to remove communal indiscipline, antagonism, communal sectarianism, I refer here particularly to the tension between Hindus and Muslim communities, but when we are tackling all different faiths, if this is to be removed, I think, I agree with the speaker who spoke here last evening that the majority community should inspire confidence in the minds of the minority communities by a generous attitude towards them. I think such a generous attitude and a spirit of tolerance to the religious susceptibilities of minor communities will rapidly pave the way for communal harmony.

We recognise that there are differences among the religions but at the same time we must know that these differences do not, in any way, establish the superiority or inferiority of any particular religion. *What is more important is that this spirit of religion is something different from its expression or manifestation in rituals and outward ceremonials. And we should make allowance for these differences.*

Our object should be that we should *try to promote brotherhood among men of different faiths by a sympathetic study and appreciation not of these externals of religion but of one another's deepest spiritual experiences and convictions.* The Congress of Faiths will be doing a great service to the country in regard to this particular point if it would help to promote such an attitude among the leaders of different religious communities in India. I consider it a special task in India to promote tolerance and better understanding of one another's religious faith. The Congress has undertaken, as I have told you, a wider purpose and that purpose is to unite all men and all women who believe in the supremacy of moral and spiritual values, and join together to stem the tide of materialism and irreligion in the world.

The growing secularization of modern thought has sapped the foundation of religious belief. An aggressive type of nationalism believes in force as the only instrument of what I may call practical atheism,

which regards mere material prosperity and economic well-being of man as the supreme end and aim of human life. These are the forces which threaten to destroy all civilization and culture.

The suspicions and conflicts are turning the world into a nightmare of fear. And therefore it is, in view of this, as I said, of this growing tide of irreligion or practical atheism and materialism, it is very necessary that *all the moral and spiritual forces of the world should be united to strengthen themselves in order to combat the spread of the evil.*

Men of all faiths, who believe in the importance of the spiritual and moral life of men, and who believe that we ought to promote harmony and goodwill among all men, and who believe that there is a divine plan and purpose in life, all such people should go together in order to bring home to men the need for a moral and spiritual regeneration. Of course, we cannot do very much, but still each of us individually can do something. We can do it in various ways. We may FIRST of all do this, the most important thing, put the high principles of our own religion in daily practice, and lead lives which will exercise a beneficent influence on those about us. That is the first and most important thing which we ourselves can do and should do. THEN AGAIN we can give our children and the coming generations the kind of EDUCATION which will help to forward the cause of boys and girls. And

LASTLY we can join together in groups, small and large, in associations, and conferences of this kind, to co-operate with all those who have a similar objective in view, in promoting good-will and mutual understanding and fellowship among men of all races. It is not possible to accomplish these objects immediately, but that is not required of us.

God fulfils himself in many ways. All that is expected of us is that we should be faithful to the Light in us and we should strive to do the utmost we can to promote the wellbeing of our fellow beings.

# SIKHISM AND ITS RELATION TO THE WORLD.

By

Her Highness the Maharani Saheba of Nabha.

MAHARAJA SAHEB, AND FRIENDS,

When I heard that there was going to be an International Congress of the World Fellowship of Faiths to be held in Madras, I thought it was a noble idea and very excellent thing to be done. And I felt that I must also go and join in the conference and have the benefit of hearing the learned speakers on this subject. I am sure, as it appeals to my mind, all those who believe that we can secure peace through religion, the idea will appeal to them very much. Therefore, I made up my mind that I should come all the way from Kandi to listen to various learned speakers here.

When I came down I never came with an idea to make a speech here myself. To tell you the truth, I came here more to listen to you, friends, who could tell us much more, than to deliver a lecture myself. But it seems that the atmosphere is infectious and therefore, I find myself this evening seated here in front of you all to speak a few words to you.

There is one thing of course that makes me very nervous. You will ask me what that is. Not only is



this the first time I am addressing a gathering of such a large number; but since it happens to be in this examination hall, I dread it most. And I suspect that it is a sort of conspiracy on your part to examine the speakers here. You should also beware, lest you may have been examined already by some people here. You should like to know who they were. May I tell you, I think, and you will agree with me, that it is the Organising Committee who have arranged this hall for these meetings to be held here, they wanted to examine you whether you are of the same view as the Organising Committee. They hope to promote peace through this kind of International Fellowships of different religions, because they can easily understand how you approve and disapprove the remarks or the speeches given by the different people on the stage.

They can very well understand what you like and dislike. Therefore, I say, you should beware, lest you might have been examined already. So that is one reason that makes me very nervous to stand before you. Therefore, I beg leave of you to permit me to sit down.

Now I may tell you, that I have come down for the purpose of attending the World Fellowship of Faiths. I have learnt much, because I have listened to very good speeches and very erudite speakers on this subject and it was a great pleasure to me because, as I told you, I honestly believe that salvation can come

to the spirit or even if you want worldly happiness, it can really come through religion and religion alone.

Now as I came here, there was nobody else representing Sikhism. I thought that I might speak a few words. Of course, today I see another Sikh brother here, who will be able to give you a very learned exposition on the subject, but I feel I may also contribute a little myself in the great task. Now this religion, the Sikh religion, is very little known outside the Punjab : perhaps very few of you know what Sikhs are and what Sikhism is. It is a very new religion and it is in its infancy, so to speak, because it is only five centuries old and the founder is Guru Nanak, of whom you read so much in Indian history. And then he was followed by other Gurus and we have in all ten Gurus.

Guru Govind sent a message about the time when Sikhism came into the world, when our Gurus were leaders. We see that the conditions in the country or other parts of the world were such that there was a necessity for a universal religion to be formed, because what we had before was a very glorious Hinduism, with a very sublime philosophy in it, but yet there was something lacking. That is what they found and besides the new religion, there were so many circumstances which necessitated the reformation of the old communities. At the time there were only two big nations here, the Hindus and the Muslims. Muslims were

the rulers as you know, and the Hindus were the subjects mostly and then there were, of course, so many differences and people were not happy and there were some prejudices and all sorts of religious prejudices and political acts. The conditions were not very good. The Sikhs felt oppressed and there were so many other difficulties and troubles and jealousies.

It is difficult to enumerate all the different circumstances that necessitated that there should be some universal religion. The necessity was very great and then this Sikh system was a thing that was welcomed. All these things necessitated the reformation of the old system.

Then it was that the great Guru Nanak thought and thought deeply. He pondered over the whole situation from his childhood. He was a great fountain of inspiration; though young in age, he was great in soul, and like all great souls was full of thoughts and ideas, and tried to relieve and remove the sufferings of humanity to the best of his ability. With these ideas he used to be always very thoughtful. You know from history that he was thinking so much that his own parents and other friends suspected that there was something wrong with the child, when he was five or six years old. And then they called in the physicians to examine him, because he would sit very quietly, he was not interested in other things which children usually like. And when the physician comes and feels his

pulse, he wants to prescribe something for the child that was suffering.

At that time, what the Great Guru spoke and said is in our sacred book. Of course, I may not repeat those words, because you are not likely to understand the meaning, but I can just give you a free translation of the lines. The Guru says: "This poor ignorant physician does not know that the ailment is not of the body but that of the mind. He tries to prescribe all sorts of things for me. But *it is the mind that is suffering.*" That suffering was not for anybody or for gaining his own salvation but it was for the humanity at large. At such a young age can you imagine a child to talk of such things ?

Leaving that apart, can any one feel that at such a young age anyone can be able to understand deeply in thinking what should be done to relieve the sufferings of humanity ? And he knew, all this salvation, all the blessings would only come through religion and therefore he must start a religion which would show people how to live. Because, as other learned speakers also told us, we must live the religion and there is no use of talking of morals or dogmas. Therefore, he wanted to give us a religion that we would like, and make it as simple as possible. Of course, I need not take much of your time on this. I should proceed further. Then it was that Sikhism came into existence. When Guru Nanak saw people suffering great misery all around and worries

and troubles, he said, "Oh Lord ! this world is burning with all these things. Save this burning world; this world is burning with the fire of these miseries, these prejudices, doubts and difficulties. There is no help even at their places of worship. They are not permitted to enter the temples. They do not show them proper kindness, they do not help them to receive any illumination from above which is their birthright." He said, " Oh Lord ! save this world which is burning with all sorts of troubles and misery." He felt for humanity. Then the words came out, a direct appeal to God.

I do not know how you are going to achieve this object of International peace in this world through International Congresses and what is your idea and how soon it can be achieved. We should not think that it will come soon or within a very short limited period. At that time in India, it took ten Gurus. Gurus came one after another to complete this mission, because it cannot be completed by one generation. There was such a lot of work to be done to prepare the nation, to prepare a nation down-trodden and to make them understand how they should live, and live according to their religion. To give them all the understanding, it took a long while, perhaps two centuries, to complete the work. The Gurus gave them Khalsa, which means pure.

Then it was that the Khalsa was born and it would

be very interesting to know about baptism. Even now we baptise our children in the same fashion. The Sikhs who perform this ceremony hold a triple-edged dagger in their hands and then they stir the sacred water and then they will repeat God's praises all along and then that baptismal water is prepared, that water is to initiate the newcomers. At the time the Guru prepares the baptismal water his wife comes with some sugar, and then puts it in the sacred water. We call it Amrita, a thing which makes you eternal; you never die after that. The significance of it is, if you take it, you will never die, you are also the same as a deathless being. You are a part and parcel of the same. I need not explain that, because there are very learned people who know much better than myself. The Divine Mother comes and puts sugar. What is the significance? A very sharp and shining blade signifies that they should all be warriors. A soldier won't be kind when there is a war. But there should also be a sweetness along with the boldness of character and spirit so infused into us. He did not want us to use it wrongly, he wanted to mix it with kindness, with sweetness as well, because we have to live in this world with the other nations. We must know how to be kind, how to be sweet. Such is our baptism. I do not know whether any other religion has the same baptism with so much moral significance. When the baptismal water is prepared, there is a sacred word on the lips of those

who prepare it. They wanted to combine God's praises along with the whole process and that is how the baptismal water is prepared for Sikhs.

And then I would like to tell you something about our temples. They are very sacred for us. They have a soul attached to them and when you go in for offering there are certain limits we allow everybody and further we should not go. We cannot go. But we cannot approach the Holiest of the Holy. A word about the living example at Amritsar, the Golden Temple, a very sacred shrine constructed by our fourth Guru. It is a beautiful place, a beautiful shrine worth visiting, one of the famous and most attractive shrines, from which any orders issued, no Sikh dares disobey with impunity.

In that shrine all those who visit it can go to the centre, to the very holiest of the holy. There is no restriction. We do not consider whether you belong to our religion or other religions. So we call it Hari Mandir, the abode of God. That is the beautiful name given to the shrine. And then there is a very interesting thing. When it was going to be built, the fourth Guru invited a Muslim friend of his to come and lay the foundation-stone of the building. And that Pir came there and he wanted to place the foundation-stone in such a manner that it should face the west. I think it is the west the Muslims always face in their shrines. And then there were the Hindus, the Guru's disciples, very devoted people. They said, 'No, it is not agreeable

to us'. They requested the Guru to place the foundation-stone so that it may face the east. Then the Guru said, 'Look here, you should not worry about this. The idea is that God is all around us and is all-pervading. That God resides in a certain particular direction is a wrong notion. The temple should be built with four doors in four directions. You can go in through any door you like, come out through any door you like.'

So it is universal from that point of view. It is ours, it belongs to everybody, you can go as I go, you can pray there as we do; and it is a universal religion from this viewpoint. And then the first Guru used to have two companions always with him. One Hindu and one Muslim; very devoted followers of him. The Guru used to sing always in praise of God daily and the companions always used to be with him throughout his travels as he visited Arabia and other countries far and wide. He had travelled and visited shrines not only of one religion but of all Hindus and Muslims alike. And there is another interesting little anecdote that I might mention here in the same connection. When he visited Mecca, the holiest city of the Muslims, he was tired after his travels, and lay down with his feet towards the holiest of the holy. And then the people said, this is wrong. They went and told the major or the person who was in charge of the shrines, "there is some person lying with his feet towards the



holiest of the holy;" and then that gentleman came there and requested the master, "This is the holiest of the holy; don't you know that you must not place your feet towards that direction?" The master said: "I am tired but you may catch hold of my feet and turn them in any direction where God is not"; and it was tried but the holiest of the holy appeared in all directions. We believe, I believe in miracles. God can and man can do miracles. Then there is the free kitchen amongst us. That is for anybody who likes to come and partake with us ; it does not matter to what caste he belongs. For every human being, the free kitchen is being run. I do not know if there is such a thing like this in any other religion.

Khalsa is a pure one, the pure religion, and after it was given a final shape, then it was dedicated to God. The religion does not belong to man after that. This religion is dedicated to the feet of the holiest of the holy, the Almighty, the All-pervading. So this is a universal religion. Sikhism is a universal religion. That is the whole effort of our Holy master; to create a religion that will be for all men, not for a particular section of mankind. When I think I belong to such a religion the idea of World Fellowship must be appealing to my mind. I have come all the way only for this purpose. I think I may take a little more of your time; there is so much to be said of this Faith of beauty; it is a fountain of energy like a baby. Lots can be said about

it. But this is not the place to say more. Therefore, I think I better leave it here and my friend Sardar Sardul Singh will be saying something more about it.

Allow me to say a few more words. I have heard all these learned speakers and I have carefully listened to them and since you are all anxious that there should be some understanding to bring about peace and happiness to mankind, considering the circumstances now, we feel it is high time that something should be done, some understanding brought about between individuals, nations, to achieve the object. And India of course can do very much in that direction. Because as our friend Sir K. V. Reddy remarked the other day, India has still a spiritual message today, and we wish it shall always be so.

Now I should like to tell you that you can have and create the same atmosphere in your countries in the West. You will ask me how. It will take a long time. It is not a thing that can be done in a day. It is very essential. *If you have any idea to bring about peace or some understanding which will aim at the attainment of peace for which the leaders and masters have exercised the greatest influence, take it upon yourself to see that the proper kind of education which is religious education may be given from the very beginning of life.*

That is one idea, as I would emphatically put it, to carry with you. Now you may, I think, carry it

to the West and put it to our sisters there, because nations are not made in schools. The attitude of the mind is not modelled in the schools, where science is taught about worldly things, but characters are formed in the nurseries when children are at a very impressionable age. Not only that;—the characters are formed at the mother's bosom. I may go still further, the characters and attitudes of the different nations are formed when the babies are still in the womb of the mothers. Therefore, it is very necessary that the leaders and mothers take it upon themselves that they will see to it that they give a proper kind of lead to their children's minds for their own good and for the peace of the world, for happiness in this world and for happiness in heaven. It is very necessary, I think. I would not like to criticise the western mothers. In India when the children wake up in the morning, they are taught to say their prayers before doing anything else. For instance, my baby is very young. Five of them, early in the morning, as soon as they wake up from their beds, the first thing they do is to say their prayers. Unless they say that, they won't eat, because we have taught they must not eat unless they have given food to their souls. They are too young to know. Let them do mechanically in the beginning; they will realise as they grow bigger. Feed the souls, then feed your body, and similarly I would like to tell you our sisters in the west. We should take every care and very great

care and see that before our children learn about science, they should learn about religion; that before they go to schools, they should begin religion. Because science without religion can play havoc, as we see in these days. It can be misused, it can be misapplied, it is like a force without any proper control, a horse without a bridle. We cannot control it. You can prepare so many things. You can destroy life any second. Before children learn of gas bombs, let them know of religion. Even the best things, if not properly used, can do great harm. That is another thing I want to add.

I think I have taken a lot of your time. I think it is better to stop and reserve further remarks to the next session. Thank you for the very patient hearing you have given me.

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## SIKHISM—ITS UNIVERSAL ASPECT.

By

Sardar Sardul Singh

MAHARAJA SAHEB, CHAIRMAN, SISTERS AND BRETHREN,

We are very much thankful to our European friends who have now introduced us to this idea of World Fellowship of Faiths. Those of you who have read the history of their own country carefully know that the idea of Fellowship of Faiths is not quite a new one to this country. I am, at this time, reminded of one such meeting which was held at Fatepur Sikri in the Temple of Worship; it was so called by Akbar. Just as this meeting is presided over by the Maharajah Saheb, that meeting was presided over by Emperor Akbar himself and in that meeting, just as I see here now the representatives of the Christian faith, representatives of Buddhism, of Zoroastrianism, of Hinduism, of Sikhism and of all other religions, similarly in that meeting there were representatives of different faiths. The meetings were held day after day to decide how to bring about better relations between different faiths and *Akbar did his best to promote the religion which gave liberty to all religions and at the same time wanted all of them to come on a common platform.* Unfortunate-

ly, owing to the political conditions in the country, that effort of Akbar failed and there were others who carried that idea further and tried to give it a concrete shape as best as they could.

One such person was Guru Nanak. He had also the same idea. He thought that the time had come to have an international religion ; a religion which may be a sort of federation for all other religions which may create a common platform for all the faiths of the world.

After him his followers carried out that idea further and perhaps many of us are not aware that the foundations of Sikh religion are laid in a sacred book which contains the views and soul-stirring offerings of men belonging to different religions,—men belonging to different faiths; the holy book of the Sikhs contains Hymns not only of Hinduism, Sikhism, not only of the Vaishnavites, of the Saivites, but also of the Muslims; not only of the high-caste Hindus but also of those whom the people in those days called untouchables.

The Holy Book of the Sikhs—that is perhaps the only Bible so far which contains the views, the right principles, the offerings of men belonging to different faiths, so that all of them may be able to stand on one platform.

The story told in Sikh history is that when Guru Arjun, the fifth Guru of the Sikhs, thought that

he should give his message to his people, he invited all the Sikhs to his place at Amritsar and said, "I am desirous of bringing all of you together. You should work under the guidance of God and God alone. Now what offerings have you to make in response?" Then they uttered different hymns and those hymns are collected in the Holy Book which we call the Holy Grantha.

This idea of World Fellowship of Faiths is very interesting. It is quite new to our hearts. I can assure you that those who are interested in this movement would get full support from us.

The Maharani Saheba of Nabha in her speech has laid before you what the main principles of Sikh religion are. One or two points I want to lay before you all. Guru Nanak wanted to bring different faiths together. What was his idea about this movement? What principles did he want to lay before the people so that they might be able to work on a common platform?

The first idea was his attitude towards this great world at that time. Even now there are two schools of thought, as one of the speakers here just told us. There are men, specially in the west, who think that this world of ours is a godless world. Atheists they call themselves, they think that what we see in the universe is the result of mechanical forces. There is nothing beyond these forces and whatever we

see are permutations and combinations of these different forces and the result is this universe of ours. As the result of such an idea, as has been in the past, and as we see today, there can be no peace in the world. It leads to, if it leads in any direction, it leads to selfishness. The result is: I want to pick your pocket and you want to pick my pocket. That is actually happening these days in Europe. These European nations are today—the more civilised nations of the world—not only making great progress in sciences but have been bringing about disastrous result : you know very well what is happening in Spain, Abyssinia, Asiatic Eastern countries, in Japan, and what they are doing in China. Well, this is the natural result of all our ideas if they are based on this theory that this universe of ours has nothing more than physical and mechanical forces. Then there are other people in India specially and in Europe also who think that this world of ours, this universe, is nothing but a mirage. It is nothing but an illusion.

So these two schools were there as they are even now today, one believing in this world to be the be-all and end-all of everything, the others regarding the universe as nothing but a shadow. Guru Nanak brought this idea before us that both these ideas were wrong. This world was as real as we call ourselves real. He said that this is the abode of God. If we



have the eyes to look, even in a blade of grass, even in a leaf of a tree there is the presence of God. . . .

This was his attitude towards this world. So it was a sacred thing for him. His idea was that as long as we live in this world, it is our duty to see that every action of ours should be regarded as a worship of God. He believed in the *Fatherhood of God and Brotherhood of Man*. When the universe was made of God, God was immanent in it; all of us are children of God and all of us must be like brothers and sisters. Then there could be no difference between us as there is no difference between the children of the same father. But religion having been carried on in different atmospheres in different countries, there could naturally be some differences. We are so many, our faces are quite different, and our dress is quite different and our thoughts are also quite different. *Unity is made of diversity. Unless there is diversity, there can be no unity. Why should we quarrel about it? Why should we say that my religion is better than your religion? The Hindu temple and the Muslim mosque have the same purpose.* We hear so much of Hindu-Muslim quarrels. The Puja of the Hindus and Namaz of the Muslims have one object. All men are like each other. Muslims and Hindus, Europeans and Christians have the dress of different countries. That is how differences arise. All men

have similar ears, similar eyes, and bodies. We are all alike; it is God who created us all.

That was the idea of Nanak about these different faiths and different religions. He wanted all of us to worship one God in our own way according to our own ideas, according to our aims, and attainments. Similarly, he wanted us to love each other because without love we cannot make any progress in the path which leads us to the home of God—the home of bliss and that is what he emphasised day in and day out that you should not call yourself either belonging to this religion or that religion simply to blind each other and simply to give pain to any of our brothers. He was once asked to what religion he belonged. Are you a Hindu or a Muslim? Nobody would say and could say whether he was a Hindu or a Muslim. He said: “I am neither a Hindu nor a Muslim. I am a servant of both; I am a servant of God, and of the Faith.”

Perhaps you might have heard, when he died, there was actually a dispute between the Hindus and Muslims: Hindus wanted to cremate him and the Muslims to bury him. The Hindus said he was a Hindu and the Muslims said he was a Muslim, and that dispute is still going on even now.

Only a few years ago, there was a Punjab Historical Society meeting. It was presided over by the Governor of the Punjab, a Christian gentleman. The

speaker was Sree Joginder Singh. He read Guru Nanak's life and after him a Hindu gentleman, Mr. Lala Ram Saran Das, leader of the Opposition in the Council of State, said : "I have followed Sardar Sahib's discourse with great interest, but Guru Nanak was nothing but a Hindu reformer; he was our own."

After him rose Sir Kalif Karl Assan; he said Guru Nanak was a Muslim and he belonged to our community, and he had gone to Mecca for Haj. You can see from his words that he mostly talks of Allah; but he talks of Ram also. When winding up, the Governor said: "Well, I have carefully gone through what the Sardar Saheb has said and I think from his teachings that Guru Nanak was a Christian."

If you are a real son of God, then Hindus should regard you as their servant, and Muslims also should regard you as their servant. When you behave as brothers, I do not understand why I should not call you a Sikh when you are so kind, when I think the best virtues which are possessed by a Sikh are also possessed by you. And I think if you live in the manner in which Guru Nanak lived, all these quarrels, all these wars will end and we will regard ourselves as real brothers. I simply want to tell you that we Sikhs would feel really grateful if you invite us to be with you in 1940, if you give us a chance to do what Guru Nanak did to contribute to bringing all these different Faiths together.

## SYNTHESIS BETWEEN RELIGION AND SCIENCE.

By

Prof. D. D. Kanga, I.E.S. (Retired).

I give here a short historical retrospect, as that, I suppose, will help us to understand the question better.

The question of synthesis between religion and science is one which is looked upon from different points of view by the East and the West. In the East, particularly in ancient India, there was never any conflict between religion and science. In fact, there was only one supreme science, and that was the science of the self, the science of man, man as a whole, man visible and invisible. All other sciences were subordinate to it. The great sages Vyāsa, Sankara and Yājñavalkya, who put forward, not as a speculation but as first-hand knowledge, the transcendental truth, Aham Brahma, I am God, which means the unity of life in diversity of forms, were and are to the present day worshipped as founders of a religion, at once the salvation, hope and comfort of mankind.

As a matter of fact, *there need not be any conflict between true science and true religion, for both are*

*aspects of One Truth.* The aim of both is the same, *viz.*, search after Truth, though the roads followed by them may be different.

The harmony which existed between religion and science in the East was unfortunately not found to be the case in the West. But the conflict which has been so beautifully depicted by Draper in his book "The Conflict between Religion and Science" was not the conflict between true science and true religion but one between Orthodox Theology or rather Churchianity and Materialistic Science. The conflict would not have arisen if each had recognised its own proper sphere of activities, and left the other alone. This conflict reached a crisis when Giordano Bruno, a Dominican monk, was burnt alive on February 17, 1600, for making a profound scientific statement regarding the Unity of Nature, which was in conflict with the orthodox doctrines of the Church. At that time the Church wielded absolute authority; the Pope and the Bible were the final arbiters, final Courts of Appeal. Whatever was stated by the Church or the Pope was to be accepted as gospel truth without questioning, without reasoning. If any bold-spirited scientist who cared more for truth than even his life, came forward with statements based on his researches which were in conflict with the dogmas of the Church, he was penalized by torture, imprisonment or death.

Such a state of affairs could not last long. Reason

asserted itself. One after another, the statements made by the clergy as regards the earth being flat and only 6,000 years old, in the centre of the universe, with the sun and the planets revolving round it, etc., etc., were disproved in the light of scientific researches. The authority of the Church was shaken.

Science elated by success went to the other extreme, and questioned the veracity of *all* statements made in the Holy Scriptures as regards God, the spiritual nature of man and the universe, the existence of worlds other than the physical, etc.

The science of the 19th century was grossly materialistic. Everything that existed in the universe was supposed to be a product of matter, the result of blind chance, of a 'fortuitous concourse of atoms.' With the spread of these ideas, all life in the existing religions vanished. The priests of the day were not learned and pious enough to give a rational exposition of some of the fundamental truths common to all religions; hence, *religion as an active factor disappeared from the life of man. The absence of true religion, with its spiritualizing and humanizing influence on the life of man, resulted in the very inharmonious and lopsided development of man.* This has had disastrous results, so much so that it led one of the presidents of the British Association for the advancement of science, the late Sir Alfred Ewing, to declare in 1932 that man has been found to be ethically unfit for the gifts

of science, for he has misused the powers which science has placed in his hands. "The Command of Nature has been put in his hands before he knows how to command himself."

The spectacle that we notice at the present day is that progress in man's moral and spiritual nature has not kept pace with his intellectual progress. This is due to too much attention having hitherto been given to researches on the sciences of matter and too little to researches on the science of man.

We are at present witnessing the dire consequences of the grossly materialistic science of the 19th century, and the results of basing our educational and national politics on the same. The justification of the invasion of Belgium in the last World War, 1914-18, by the Chancellor of the German Empire on the plea that it was for Germany "a biological necessity", the invasion of Abyssinia by Italy, and of China by Japan, on very nearly the same grounds, are instances in point. These show the trend of civilization today under the ægis of modern science. The recent world events, the impending crisis, and the threat to modern civilization, have brought once again to the forefront the question of the necessity of religion in the life of man. *As Bernard Shaw rightly puts it, "Civilization needs a religion as a matter of life and death".* But the religion which will appeal to an educated man and woman should be a living and dynamic religion and not a

static and frozen religion, full of false beliefs and superstitions, orthodox dogmas and soulless traditions. It should be a religion which should appeal to the highest urge and the noblest sentiments in man. True religion is a binding force. The true ancient Hindu faith would not dream of keeping its followers in hide-bound, water-tight castes. The true Brāhmana is not one who is born in a Brāhmana family, but one who is living the life of a Brāhmana. A man born in a Sūdra family who is living the clean life of a Brāhmana is no longer a Sūdra but a Brāhmana. The people of the world would naturally divide themselves into the five classes of a teacher, a warrior, a tradesman, a craftsman, and an unskilled labourer according to the kind of life they live. But it would not be right to relegate them simply because of their birth to these classes and keep them there for ever. Similarly, true Islam would not dream of any sort of antagonism between the Shias and the Sunnis. And true Christianity would not dream of condemning people to torture, imprisonment and death for honestly holding certain views as regards nature and man. We should try to distinguish between true and false religion. Going to Church on Sunday, to the Synagogue on Saturday, to the Mosque on Friday, and to the temple every morning, feeding the priests, doing certain rites and ceremonies mechanically, etc.—these do not constitute true religion. It is the clean life we



live and the way we live it, from day to day and from hour to hour, trying to understand and help others, and sharing our best with others, *that constitutes true religion.*

And the science of the 20th century is no longer materialistic. The scientists now recognise that there is a Design in Nature and consequently a Purposive and Directive Mind behind the great drama of Creation and Evolution. But the misuse of the forces of Nature by politicians for their selfish ends has forced the pointed attention of the scientists and leaders of thought to the urgent necessity for the study of man and social sciences, which has been so far altogether neglected. Once again, the question of questions which has become the centre of intensive study and research in the West is the age-old question of "Man, Know Thyself". It should be clearly pointed out here that this question cannot be solved completely and satisfactorily unless and until man as a whole is studied, Man Visible, the outer man, the material man, by the ordinary scientific method, Man, Invisible, the Inner man, the Spiritual man by the occult method. It is the synthesis of these two methods of research that should be our goal; it is a consummation devoutly to be wished. A faint glimmering of this approaching event is being foreshadowed in the illuminating discussion that we had in *Nature* (*Nature*, p. 784 of 8-5-37 and pp. 997-1012 of 12-6-37) only a few months back over the question of

the relationship that should subsist between metaphysics and science.

Only then shall we know something of man's origin, his true nature, his purpose in life, and his glorious destiny. Science will then be the supreme science of the Self, as of old; *Science will then be spiritualized and humanized, and there will be a harmonious development of man.* Man, though an intellectual giant, will not then use the strength of his intellect like a giant to crush the weak and the helpless, but will use it to protect and help them and bring them to his own level. He will share his knowledge, wisdom and all his physical, intellectual and spiritual possessions with others. *The laws by which he will be guided onwards in his evolutionary path will henceforward always be the law of love, the law of service, the law of sacrifice.* The law of "struggle for existence" which was only a half-truth of science, which is the law of the jungle, and which characterises the brute kingdom, will no longer appeal to him, for he has now become a true human being and as such, his true religion will be a religion of love and co-operation. Who can dream of a conflict between such a science and such a religion, for they are now merged into one !

And so, on this memorable occasion of the Fourth International Congress of the World Fellowship of Faiths held in this country, let India once again give a lead to the thought of the world, as did ancient India,

but now supported by modern science, by boldly restating the great truth of the ultimate spirituality of all things, and emphasizing the supremacy of the science of the Self, the science of man, as the science of all sciences, including all other sciences and superior to them. Therein lies the key to the solution of the question with which we started, *viz.*, how to bring about a synthesis between religion and science.

## FELLOWSHIP OF FAITHS.

By

Rao Bahadur C. Ramanujachariar, on March 14, 1938.

FELLOW SEEKERS,

When talking of a Fellowship of Faiths, it seems necessary to ask and answer the question: which comes first, *Fellowship* or *Faith*? To my mind it seems that faith is the first and foremost thing to promote and cultivate; and then fellowship will surely follow in its wake as a natural consequence; whereas the converse need not be true. There can be a fellowship without faith, though of an evanescent and unabiding character; but there can be no faith without fellowship, for one who has true faith in God sees Him in all creation and extends his love and service to all without distinction of high and low. That is the first thing which we unfailingly observe in one in whom there has been a real dawn of spirituality.

We are, as it were, situated on the myriads of radii of a circle of which God is the centre and of which the circumference is nowhere. As we move towards the centre, do we not come closer together? So do we naturally draw into closer Fellowship as we move towards the centre of being in faith and devotion.

While we move along, we feel impelled by two forces, the centripetal and the centrifugal; the one draws us constantly towards the centre, while the other tries to throw us off at a tangent; however, the final goal of all is the same. If we strive and seek with a conscious effort and whole-hearted devotion, the progress is quickened. In this march of humanity (for the matter of that, all creation) towards its goal, each individual needs the help of all and a recognition of that idea is the basis of all Fellowship in all human endeavours.

The word *Fellowship* means the companionship of equals engaged in the same pursuit. So it is a happy word full of significance and not chosen merely to alliterate with Faith. If then this fellowship is to fructify we should unreservedly recognise the validity and need for a variety of faiths, which are not contradictory but complementary. If this is not granted, even if there should be tolerance, there can be no lasting peace and amity—for tolerance implies a superior and patronising air of condescension and a perpetuation of inequality. Even a *federation* or a *league* is impossible between unequals; how then can fellowship, which is a closer fusion, be possible in the absence of that mutual understanding and acceptance of one another's viewpoint?

If the League of Nations stood in need of the disarmament of nations for the success of its aim, a

league of faiths needs another kind of disarmament. Faiths better placed with regard to the number of their adherents or material prosperity should not invade the domains of other faiths, trying to extend their own dominion by gaining adherents, and consider it a holy mission. Such faiths must disarm themselves and so disarm the growing volume of suspicion they create in regard to their intentions.

It is rather depressing to find that in these deliberations of ours we have not secured in a larger measure the active participation of those engaged in the propagation of their faiths. *They* need the counsel of a fellowship like this more than most of us laymen do. The claim of exclusive perfection, which some faiths still cherish in this twentieth century of ours, militates against the recognition of the harmony of religions. I had recent experience of an ecclesiastical magnate, invited to co-operate in connection with a Parliament of Religions, who, while declining the invitation and patronisingly appreciating the humanitarian activities of the Ramakrishna Mission, pointed out the difficulty in his participating in the religious activities of a lesser faith, *viz.*, Hinduism. At a religious meeting held in Madras, a missionary said that the word "conversion" was misapplied when it referred to conversions to Christianity, as conversions can apply to change of religion on the same plane and not to those who change to religion on a higher plane

like Christianity, in which case the word, 'elevation' was a more appropriate term to use. Such preposterous propositions are made even in these days in India.

We are counting without the host, therefore, when we leave out of account the activities of persons and bodies of persons holding on to such doctrines and they exert today a thousand times more powerful influence than this World Fellowship can ever hope to wield. The beliefs and activities of these bodies surely pave the way to estrange one faith from another day by day. Without the co-operation of those who believe in mass and economic conversions, without their coming down or coming up to meet those engaged in establishing a fellowship, the object of this organisation must remain at best a pleasant dream. So I would request members of this fellowship when they go to Europe and America in particular to tell those who give succour to missionary bodies here to direct those bodies to change their ways.

*Sri Ramakrishna*, the apostle of fellowship of faiths, the representative Hindu saint of this age, the harbinger of peace, embodied in his life the religious aspirations and experience of the Christian and the Muslim as well as the Hindu and *he wanted the Christian to be a better Christian, the Hindu to be a better Hindu, the Musalman to be a better Musalman*. That has been the spirit of India through the ages. We have

built churches for the Christians and mosques for the Muslims. Today the Hindus at any rate in our part of the country participate actively in their thousands in the Moharrum festival; this is a more significant fact than reports of clashes from a few quarters. *Amity among the votaries of other religionists has been the key-note of all great spiritual teachings in this land.* Saint Thyagaraja, the great saint musician of South India, has in one of his popular songs laid down the attitude which one should hold towards other religions. A woman while attaching great sanctity to the "Mangalam," the symbolic jewel of marital tie, equally values the other jewels she bears; while reserving the special relationship to her husband, gives due regard and respect to the other members of the husband's family, like father-in-law, mother-in-law and brother-in-law, etc. So a person while living the religion of his own birth, should show respect to other religions.

Let India hold on to this best of its traditions and live up to it. Then this whole country will exemplify as in no other part of the world, the fruitfulness of the Fellowship of Faiths.

May he who is the Brahman of the Hindus, the Allah of the Musalmans, the Christ of the Christians, the Buddha of the Buddhists,—May he give us true understanding and sympathetic fellow-feeling so that the whole of humanity may live as children of the



same father in amity, concord and love. And may  
we all join together and pray to Him

त्वमेव माता च पिता त्वमेव

त्वमेव बंधुश्च सखा त्वमेव ।

त्वमेव विद्या द्रविणं त्वमेव

त्वमेव सर्वं मम देवदेव ॥

Thou alone art my mother, thou alone art my  
father,

Thou alone art my relative, thou alone art my  
friend.

Thou alone art my learning, thou alone art my  
wealth ;

Thou alone art my all, my God of Gods.

# CONTRIBUTION OF SHINTOISM TO WORLD RELIGION.

By

MR. Watanabe, *Japanese Delegate.*

LADIES AND GENTLEMEN,

I highly appreciate the privilege and honour of being asked by your society to contribute a short sketch of Shinto, as one of the series to be discussed in this evening's proceedings.

Shinto, or Shintoism, that is, the way of the Gods, was and is one of the most important and fundamental essentials in the cultural life of the Japanese people. It is the spiritual blood and bone, so to speak, through which the Japanese nation has her being. Without a knowledge of what Shinto is, no one can understand what is Japanese Confucianism or Japanese Buddhism, because, these two religions were greatly modified for adoption to the land of the Rising Sun by the influence of the indigenous Shinto belief. Shinto is the innermost spiritual vital force of the people of Japan.

The knowledge of the foreign people who studies Japanese religion, Japanese art and literature, will be comparatively valueless if he lacks an adequate knowledge of Shinto. I would remark in this respect,

“Don't say that you know Japan, until you have gained some knowledge of Shinto”, so important, even so indispensable is the knowledge of Shinto for a foreigner to understand the spiritual culture of the Japanese.

I have to confess that it is so difficult for me to explain to you in the short time about Shinto to the extent that you may grasp some idea of it. When studying closely the subject, we had better proceed along the analytical steps in accordance with the course of its development. But it is too short a time for me to do so. I am giving you now a general idea of Shinto, the faith of the people of Japan.

What is Shinto ? Shinto means Kami no michi, or literally the way of Kami or God.

Then what is the meaning of the word michi or way, and what is the meaning of Kami or God in the Japanese sense ?

The word michi or way means religion, both teaching and practice in this case, and Kami means God or Gods or deities, sometimes souls or spirits. At the same time, Kami has another signification, not religious but quite secular. The word Kami, literally and etymologically considered, means higher, upper, above and superior. Therefore, anything, man or beast, animal or plant, organic or inorganic, which, in certain respects, is higher than ourselves, is entitled to be called Kami.

In the long course of history, two such conceptions of Kami, religious and secular, are mixed up so puzzlingly that it happens very often that no one can tell which is which. This is one of the very causes which have given rise to the view that Shinto is not a religion at all, because its Kami is nothing but a human personality higher in rank than his fellow men. Thus we have a view that Shinto expresses a relation not between God and man, which is truly a religion, but rather a relation between man and man, from which morality may spring, but never religion. I should say this is a very erroneous view.

In Shinto a man of an ethically noble character may be worshipped, not because of his human nature, but because of superior divine nature, which in reality is above that of humanity, just as Buddhists of ancient India took refuge in Buddha and the ancient Israelites did in Jehovah.

To see divinity in humanity, contrary to a religion of the theocratic type, is one of the characteristics of a religion of the theanthropic type. In a comparative study of religions, as you know, there are two fundamentally different ways of conceiving Divinity. The one may be styled as theocratic type or creative type of religion and the other may be spoken of as theanthropic or generative type.

In theocratic religion, Divinity stands high above man and nature : with its formula of "God is above

us," it is transcendent of man and the world. Theanthropic religion, contrary to the former, sees Divinity in man and nature; it is inherent in man and the universe, and its language proclaims "God is in us." In short, in the theocratic religion there is creation of man and nature by the One Supreme God: and in the theanthropic religion, not creation but emanation of the world from the Divine.

Now I am going to consider Shinto with the distinction of both types of religion, theocratic and theanthropic in view. Throughout the stage and course of the development of Shinto, it does not belong to the theocratic type.

Shinto in its childhood was lower nature religion. The crude philosophy of the ancient Japanese mind was first animatism, then followed animism, as is the case with other people in the same nature stage. Nature worship, simple or complex, is one of the most remarkable features of Shinto in its first stage. The ancient Japanese were surrounded on all sides by numberless superhuman, supernatural divine objects, both organic and inorganic, whom they were accustomed to call the "Eight hundred Myriads of Gods", Eight lakhs of Gods in Indian calculation.

Among the inorganic objects deified, we find heavenly phenomena, *e.g.*, the sun and moon, regarded as chief deities. Thus appeared the Sun-Goddess,

Amaterasu-Omikami, and the Moon God, Tsukiyom-no-Mikoto.

Passing through the most primitive stage of nature religion, Shinto has developed into so-called polytheism, a differentiation of gods and goddesses,—father and mother, master and servants, all appeared in the divine circle, just as is the case with human society, A divine heirarchy classification came into being. Thus the ancestral Sun-Goddess, Amaterasu-Omikami sent his grandson Ninigino-Mikoto to the Island of Japan, when she expressed to him her wishes for his future prosperity and for the sacred mission of the Japanese nation in the following words :

“The Luxuriant Land of Reed Plains is a country which our descendants are to inherit. Go, therefore, Our grandson, and rule over it and may our Imperial lineage continue unbroken and prosperous, co-eternal with Heaven and Earth !”

Thus, this grandson of the Sun-Goddess, made the foundation of the Empire of Japan.

The great-grandson of this God, the Emperor of Jimmu, the first human Emperor and historical founder of Japan, was born and made the solid foundation of the imperial lineage and the country 2598 years ago. So it is believed that the Japanese imperial lineage has continued unbroken from the ancestral Sun-Goddess

down to the present Emperor, who, like his successive divine predecessors, occupies the throne by divine right, representing divinity in humanity. This divine right is a complete unity of political governance and religious observances. That means the religious practice of the nation and the government administration inseparably united and completely identified in one entire whole.

As the history of religions shows us, when progress is made in the civilization of a nation, the religion advances in the intellectual and ethical sense of the term, and thus from nature religion arises culture religion. Such is the case with Shinto.

As is well known, purity is one of the fundamental religious canons of Shinto :

“To do good is to be pure; to commit evil is to be impure.”

There are two significations of purity in Shinto : one is outer purity and the other inner or heart purity. If a man is truly sincere in mind he will be sure to succeed in realizing a communication with the Divine.

In our way of belief, man can be god if he is pure and right because we believe “God is in us.” There is an old writing that “a righteous man, pure in mind and just in conduct, is himself a deity.”

A noble character, for instance, laying down his life on the battlefield for his sovereign and his country

is canonized as a Kami or deity in the shrine, because such noble self-sacrifice with pure mind suggests something divine to the Japanese consciousness of the theanthropic type, even when the religious consciousness of theocratic type might not be so affected. Such being the case Shinto in its cultural stage culminates in the faith of the divine ruler of the nation and herein lies the life and essence of Shinto, the national religion of the Japanese people, past and present, throughout all stages, natural and cultural alike, completely in accordance with the Japanese mind of the present age of enlightenment, as it has always been in the past. In this respect, Shinto is the Japanese religion of loyalty.

Considering the points discussed above, I can summarize Shinto briefly by describing it as follows :— The vital essence of Shinto manifests itself in an expression of that unique spirit of national service of the Japanese people which comprehends not only their morality but their religion culminating in their own peculiar form of loyalty towards the divine ruler, who is the united head, both practical and religious.

In order to understand the Japanese mind correctly, foreigners must bear in mind the fact that a Japanese Buddhist or Christian is a Shintoist. In other words, whatever religion he believes in, he is an inborn partner of, or unprofessed believer in, the national faith of Shinto.



From what is said above, it can be easily and clearly seen that Shinto is not a dead religion like that of bygone Greece or Rome, but has a vitality in no way inferior to that of Buddhism, Christianity or Islam. It is the religion which, flourishing in Japan from ancient times, maintains its vigour today unabated. It is true that Shinto has been influenced to a great extent by such teachings as Buddhism and Confucianism, yet it has never been annihilated by imported foreign creeds. On the contrary, it has unfailingly maintained itself, generation after generation, revealing from time to time new phases of a higher and higher order of religion.

The national religion of Rome has shared the same sad fate as the religion of ancient Egypt and the old religion of Babylonia and Assyria, which have passed into oblivion. All these religions are things of the past, gone for ever, representing no faith of the people of today. It is quite otherwise with Shinto. Shinto stands as one of the fundamental spiritual characteristics of the Japanese nation.

Every year Ise shrine attracts hundreds and thousands of pilgrims to pay homages to the ancestral Sun-Goddess, while the Yasukuni shrine has the nationwide tribute to worship the pure and noble-hearted people who died in self-sacrifice for the welfare of the country.

In Europe, a world religion, Christianity, has

replaced or displaced the older national faith of Greece and Rome. In Japan, however, the national Shinto religion has never been superseded by any other religion, imported into the Island of Japan.

The original name of Japan, Hinomoto, dates back to the time immemorial when the heavenly grandson descended from the plains of High Heaven. Hinomoto is the old name of Nippon, and means the land of the Rising Sun. The Japanese religion of Shinto is the one which has been and is and will be flourishing in the land of the Rising Sun under the descendant of the Divine Ruler with the sacred mission of prosperity and welfare of the people.

Lastly, ladies and gentlemen, I have to express my thanks to the Secretary of this Society who allowed me to stand on this platform for my speech and to you all who have been patient enough to hear my humble contribution to this evening's proceedings.

Thank you.

## PEACE THROUGH RELIGION.

By

The Sectional President the Hon'ble Mr. Yakub  
Hassan, Minister, Madras Cabinet.

MR. PRESIDENT, LADIES AND GENTLEMEN,

The organizers of this Movement have laid us under a very great obligation by deciding to hold the Fourth Conference here in India. The object of that Congress, it appears to me, is to establish Fellowship of Faiths.

One good result of it is this ; when we hear such expositions of all religions from learned men who would speak about their religion, we are carried away by the recollections of the speakers and for the moment we see that the religion to which we belong is not the only religion that one can claim to be noble, but that other religions also have a noble aim to the followers who believe in that religion. And when you come to this conclusion that after all truth is one and has been preached to different people by different teachers, it is after all the unity of all religious thoughts that most forcibly comes to our minds in this conference.

Therefore, though we go back from the confer-

ence with our faith in our own religion not shaken by the conference, at the same time we also go back with that spirit leaving aside the prejudices that we hold against other religions. So the best thing we can do to promote world's understanding is this, that we may agree to differ but at the same time differ not as opponents but as friends. Once this agreement is made between us, we will be better fitted to solve the great problems which we all of us have not solved.

Italy, the Christian Italy, goes to Ethiopia, another Christian country, and dominates over it, conquers it, and the whole world condemns Italy and yet Italy had her object realised in the teeth of the whole world's opposition. Now war is not between religions and communities but it is between Christians and Christians, between Japanese, the followers of Shinto Religion, which was just now expounded to us so well, and the Chinese, the followers of Confucius, whom the Japanese love.

Now what is distressing is that *religion is itself faced with great danger*. People, educated people, pooh-pooh the idea of religion, and if the world goes on for another decade or two in this manner as it is going on now, I think religion will be dislodged from the place that it still continues to occupy. This conference has a triple object, it has got to induce the present generation to take interest in religion;

that is the main object—that we must bring people to take interest in religion. We don't want to teach them a religion, but the experience of all religions and authors of religions. Mr. Bokhari and Mohammad Ali addressed the Muslim world, and they addressed the other religionists of the world also. They had addressed the Muslims themselves; and they told the Muslims particularly that as long as we are not carrying the spirit of Islam we are away from it. *If this conference succeeds in putting religion on the pedestal from which it is being dragged down, it will indeed have achieved a very great object.* We boast of civilization, but we cannot say we are civilized people as long as we are doing now actually what savages did in the beginning of the world. We grasp that which does not belong to us. Every nation is trying to get something that does not belong to it, to dominate over other nations. That is what exactly we are doing and this must be stopped. This cannot be stopped as long as one nation on the face of the earth is a subject nation to another nation. Peace cannot be restored so long.

When once the principle is established, keep what is justly yours, then alone can peace be established. If in your conference this truth were brought home to the people and the nations, through this conference we could have done very good service. Let me thank Mrs. Gasque and her colleagues for holding

the conference here, in Europe and throughout the world.

Every nation has got some religion and the nations are not living in terms of peace with other nations. But here in India all religions have found a home. Hinduism is not the only religion of India. It was so before Muslims came here. Muslims who are here are no foreigners. They are sons of the soil, because they belong to India.

Just as China has got two religions, India has also got two religions and there are others also. In other countries all the people belong to one religion. Everywhere else, there is one nation and one religion, but the Indian nation has got many religions. And here we have got problems and conflicts.

Our speakers have spoken about the high place that India occupies. We are very proud of it. But at the same time, I must confess to my great shame *that none of us are actuated by the principles and true spirit of religion and 'instead of living in peace we are quarrelling with one another.*

But there is one consolation in this that our wars, our quarrels here are not religious; they are political, just as they are political throughout the world. Through such conferences as we are all holding here, we hope to *bring this truth home to us that we are only to live in peace with one another* and we will find ourselves as one nation and then we will set an example to the

whole world that the solution of international problems lies through non-violence. This is the lesson we are trying to teach to ourselves as well as to the other countries.

The Maharajah Sahib has done Indians a great kindness indeed by acting as President on our behalf.

## WHAT INDIA HAS DONE TO ESTABLISH FELLOWSHIP OF FAITHS.

[ Mr. Ramananda Chatterjee's speech, which was taken as delivered, is summarised below in part. ]

One of the objects of the Congress of the World Fellowship of Faiths is to abolish war and bring about lasting peace. As in modern times wars are not caused—not at any rate solely or mainly—by conflicting religious beliefs, the establishment of the fellowship of faiths cannot by itself lead to the cessation of war. But if it succeeds in bringing about among the peoples of the earth mutual understanding and appreciation of one another's faiths, that will spiritualize men's lives and may lead indirectly to the outlawry of war.

I shall attempt briefly to outline what has been done in India since time immemorial to bring about a mutually tolerant and appreciative attitude among the adherents of different religions.

It cannot be said with truth that there was never any religious intolerance and persecution in ancient and medieval India;—of modern times I will not speak. But this can be asserted with truth that the indigenous religions of India and their adherents were not as intolerant and as fierce persecutors as the follow-



ers of some other faiths abroad. When Indian kings had the power to prevent the ingress and permanent settlement in the country of foreigners from abroad, even then the Jews settled here, the Parsis settled here, the Nestorian Christians settled here, the Syrian Christians settled here, and some Armenians also came to this country to live here permanently. There were no anti-Jewish, anti-Parsi or anti-any-other-ancient-immigrant purges or riots. That shows the tolerant and hospitable frame of the indigenous Indian mind.

I like the thing denoted by the expression religious tolerance, but not the phrase itself. For we have often to tolerate people who make a nuisance of themselves. I could wish there were a short expression signifying appreciation of and respect for faiths other than one's own. Of this virtue India supplies perhaps the earliest historical example. We all know that the emperor Asoka enjoined and practised equal appreciation and treatment of Brāhmanas and Sramanas (Buddhist monks) alike. It is also on record that when, periodically, the emperor Harsha gave away all that his treasuries contained, Brāhmanas and Sramanas, Hindus and Buddhists, were alike the recipients of what he gave.

But a much earlier example may be given. In the days of the Buddha we find various religious sects mentioned but no mention of mutual persecution. Some of the sects mentioned are : Padaka, Latuka,

Nigantha, Puppha-sataka, Tedandika, Ekasikha, Ajibika, Paribattaka, Siddhipatta, Kondapuggalika, etc.

In the medieval age, the emperor Akbar set an example of cultural fellowship in the sphere of religion. Dara Shukoh, eldest son of Shah Jehan, was also a very liberal-minded man. His is the credit for a Persian translation of some of the Upanishads.

In medieval times, the spirit of cultural fellowship in the sphere of religion gave birth to a Dadu, a Kabir, a Rabidas, a Nanak, a Rajjab-ji, a Ramanand, and many another saint and sage of Hindu and Musalman extraction. Of Nanak it is on record that he said: "I am neither a Hindu, nor a Musalman; I am the servant of all." Of Kabir it has been said that when he died, Hindus and Muslims wanted to perform his funeral rites according to their respective faiths. But on removing the pall, only a heap of flowers was found. Perhaps that symbolizes religious and cultural fellowship and unity.

It is to be noted that though these medieval saints and sages were liberal and unsectarian in outlook, they were at the same time essentially Indian in spirit.

In modern times, there are records of Hindu-Moslem amity and fellowship. I will pick out only one. In Dr. Taylor's *Topography of Dacca*, published in 1839, Ch. IX, p. 257, the following passage is to be found:

“Religious quarrels between the Hindus and the Mahomedans are of rare occurrence. These two classes live in perfect peace and concord, and a majority of the individuals belonging to them have even overcome their prejudices so far as to smoke from the same hookah.”

Among individuals in India in modern times Rammohun Roy set the earliest and the most illustrious example of scholarly and deep appreciation of and respect for faiths other than his own. That as a Hindu he studied the Vedas and other Hindu scriptures in the original may not be surprising—though not many Hindus did it in those days or do it even now. But he studied the Jewish and Christian scriptures also in the original Hebrew and Greek, the Islamic scriptures in the original Arabic, and the Jaina scriptures in the original Sanskrit. As a boy of 16, he crossed the Himalayas to Tibet to learn all about Buddhism. He was acquainted with the teachings of the medieval saints of northern India in Hindi. When at Paris, he began to learn the language of the Zoroastrian scriptures. He respected all sects alike.

With all his wide and deep scholarship in many oriental and occidental languages and his religious catholicity, he was a nationalist to the backbone. That there was no intellectual and spiritual Eurasianism in him is evidenced by his Bengali hymns, by the Sans-

krit name, Brāhmo Samāj, chosen for the society of worshippers founded by him, by its order of divine service instituted by him, and by his editions of many Sanskrit scriptures, with translations.

The Maharshi Debendranath Tagore, deeply imbued with Upanishadic lore, was devotedly fond of the Persian mystic poet Hafiz, too. So was Raj Narain Bose, first president of the Adi Brāhmo Samāj and grand-father of Sri Aurobindo. He was a Sanskrit scholar, too.

Keshub Chunder Sen gave the study and appreciation of other faiths and institutional turn, as it were. One of his co-workers, Bhai Girish Chandra Sen, was the first to translate the Quran into Bengali, and to compile character-sketches of Moslem saints. Bhai Protap Ch. Mozoomdar wrote "The Oriental Christ." Bhai Gour Gobinda Upādhyāy wrote the *Gita Samanvaya Bhāshya*, Bhai Aghornath Gupta wrote a life of the Buddha, and so on.

The *Sloka-Sangraha*, compiled under Keshub's directions, contains verses from all the principal scriptures of the world, with translations.

The essentially national element in Keshub's spiritual constitution manifested itself in his adoption and popularization of Vaishnava kirtan and religious dance.

The late Babu Abinash Chandra Majumdar of Lahore, a missionary of the Sadharan Brāhmo Samāj,

translated the Sikh scriptures, *Japaji* and *Sukhamani*, into Bengali.

The teaching of Paramahansa Rama Krishna Dev,   
यत मत तत पथ “As many doctrines, so many paths to the goal,” has popularized the appreciation of faiths other than one’s own. This doctrine and the spiritual attitude underlying it have been given greater publicity by his disciples than by any other body of religious men.

The Swami Vivekananda and his co-workers and disciples have combined the monism of the Vedanta with the practical philanthropy of the West to a greater extent than any other modern Indian group of religious workers.

The Theosophical Society has done much for the promotion of appreciation of all faiths.

Rabindranath Tagore’s Visva-bharati University promotes the fellowship of the faiths and cultures of India and the world outside.

May we be worthy of the teachings and examples of all those teachers, sages and saints of all lands and ages who have stressed the importance of religious fellowship and cultural unity !

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